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MADURAI UNIVERSITY PUBLICATION

# PHILOSOPHY OF TIRUVALLUVAR

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**DR. T. P. MEENAKSHISUNDARAN**  
VICE-CHANCELLOR



MADURAI UNIVERSITY  
1969

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# PREFACE

My lectures our Swarnammal Endowment Lectures, 1963, instituted by Dr. R. P. Sethu Pillai in the Madras University are being now reprinted with the kind permission of the Madras University, as the publication of the Madurai University in connection with the programme of celebrations of the 2000th anniversary of Saint Tiruvalluvar. I am very thankful to the Madras University for having given this permission. I am very grateful to the Madurai University especially its Syndicate, for agreeing to issue this as the Madurai University publication.

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18-11-1969

T. P. MEENAKSHISUNDARAN

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## TRANSLITERATION TABLE

அ = a	ட் = t
ஆ = ā	ண் = ṇ
இ = i	த் = t
ஈ = ī	ந் = n
உ = u	ப் = p
ஊ = ū	ம் = m
எ = e	ய் = y
ஏ = ē	ர் = r
ஐ = ai	ல் = l
ஒ = o	வ் = v
ஔ = ō	ழ் = l
ஔ = au	ள் = l
ஃ = h	ற் = r
க் = k	ன் = ṇ
ங் = ṅ	ல = ś/ṣ
ச் = c	ஷ் = ṣ
ஞ் = ñ	ஜ் = j

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1

The Madras University is my *alma mater* and she is more than a mother to me in having given a shape and form to my personality. She represents to me the high traditions of all those great masters under whose feet I learnt the glories of the heights reached by human mind. Therefore I feel honoured by this invitation to deliver these lectures from this University still remaining true to its ideals under the able guidance of our beloved Vice-Chancellor Dr. A.L. Mudaliar and the team of industrious teachers, of whom I shall content myself on this occasion by referring to the present Head of the Tamil Department, Dr. M. Varadarajan.

This series of lectures is under the Swarnammal Memorial Endowment instituted by my teacher Dr. R. P. Sethu Pillai, true to the Indian ideal of perpetuating the memory of his mother, a memory which we cherish with love and gratitude, because it is she who had given us this illustrious son of Tamil, who at a time, when even Tamilians were forgetting their Tamil and its culture, made Tamil scholarship popular among the educated and the uneducated, from many platforms, and through many books, in unrivalled style, full of rhythm and majesty. He had the privilege of being the first Lazarus Professor of Tamil in this Madras University and I am proud of lecturing under his Endowment Scheme. I feel thus doubly honoured,

## 1.2

No author is as great as Tiruvalluvar in Tamil and his work has the unique privilege of being praised through all the ages and in almost all the countries of the world, by all conflicting religions and philosophies. Tirukkuṟaḷ, his book is, as it were, the Bible of the Tamilians and it has been translated into many languages of the world. But unfortunately it is not possible to know anything about the life of its author, Valluvar. The word Valluvar refers in modern times to, more or less a priestly class among the Harijans, often well versed in astrology. Books like *Nāṇaveṭṭiyāṇ*, a Siddha work on alchemy are ascribed to Valluvar, equating his name with that of a caste. According to one tradition, he is the son born to a Brahmin by a Harijan woman. This tradition is as old as *Nāṇāmirtam*, the philosophical work in Tamil, probably of the 12th or 13th century. A later version of this, found in *Kapilar Akaval*, will read in the first *Tirukkuṟaḷ* the name of his father and mother in the phrase 'Āti Pakavaṇ', 'Āti' (ādi) being the mother and 'Pakavaṇ' (bhagavan) the father, and will make Avvai and Kapilar, Tiruvalluvar's sister and brother. But *Nāṇāmirtam* gives the name of the father as Yālitattaṇ. *Tiruvalluva Mālai*, said to be a series of verses composed by 49 poets of the 3rd Caṅkam, in one of its verses, refers to fools slighting the author as a mere Valluvar, whilst the learned will not accept that statement [*Māmūlanār*, Verse-8]. The earliest reference to this *Tiruvalluva Mālai* is found in *Kallāṭam* and also in the commentary on *Neminātam*, probably all written within the last thousand years.

Vaḷḷuvar was a term, applied to the officers publishing the royal proclamations all round the capital city, riding on the elephants with proclamation drums, as is made clear in Maṇimēkalai. Others who will trace every thing to Sanskrit have suggested that Vaḷḷuvar is the Tamilised form of the Sanskrit word 'Vallabha.'

Tiruvaḷḷuvar has become a tradition by himself and various anecdotes and folk stories have gathered around his name. His wife's name is given as Vācuki and she is described as an embodiment of chastity. He is also in some traditions connected with Ēlēla-siṃha, a Tamilian King of Ceylon in the 2nd Century B.C. or a descendant of that great Chieftain. Ēlā is, however, taken as Ēlācārya, a Jain scholar and saint. Tiruvaḷḷuvar is therefore considered as a disciple of Kunda Kundācārya, by the late lamented Prof. Cakravarthi Nayanar. Some claim on the basis of Tiruvaḷḷuva Mālai that Kuṟaḷ pleased the heart of the Pāṇḍya [Verse 19]. There is a tradition that the self-conceited Caṅkam poets were brought to their senses by Tiruvaḷḷuvar and that Tiruvaḷḷuva Mālai was sung on that occasion. According to this tradition, Tiruvaḷḷuvar should belong to the closing years of the Caṅkam age. Because of this, Vaḷḷuvar is said to be the glory of Madurai, the Pāṇḍya capital [Verse 21] though Tirukkuṟaḷ is considered to be the glory of all the kings of the Tamil land and in that sense a national Bible of the Tamilians [Verse 10]. Therefore, Vaḷḷuvar's connection with Madurai may not contradict the other powerful tradition that he belonged to Mylapore near Santhome, in Madras, where Dr. Pope feels that Vaḷḷuvar could have had the opportunities of listening to the

Sermon on the Mount explained by the apostle St. Thomas.

### 1.3

In view of all this, it is difficult to fix the date of Tirukkuṟaḷ. Cilappatikāram and Maṇimēkalai quote from Tirukkuṟaḷ [Cil. 21: 34; Maṇi. 22: 60-61]. Therefore Vaḷḷuvar must be anterior to these works. There are certain similarities in the phraseology of Tirukkuṟaḷ and the Caṅkam works. It has been argued by some that it was Tiruvaḷḷuvar who must have borrowed these phrases while others assert that Caṅkam works must have borrowed from Vaḷḷuvar. There is one verse in Puṟaṇānūru which seems to be an elaboration of Kuṟaḷ [Kuṟaḷ-110; Puṟam. 34]. 'Aṟam pāṭiṟṟē' - 'Dharma has sung this way' thus asserts Puṟaṇānūru. This is interpreted as referring to Tirukkuṟaḷ. The only way to get rid of this argument is to assume that this Kuṟaḷ is simply echoing an older verse popular in the Caṅkam age, to which Puṟam also must have referred. Certain arguments have been put forward by the late lamented Vaiyapuri Pillai, the former Head of the Department of Tamil of this University, to bring down the age of Vaḷḷuvar to the 5th century. The position has been examined by me in my other works and it is not germane to the topic of the present lectures to go into those details. But one may make, in passing, the following statement. The age, the Professor fixes, for the Sanskrit works are not accepted by all; nor his arguments are convincing that Vaḷḷuvar actually borrowed from the works he refers to. As to the linguistic arguments, much more detailed scientific work has to be done. One may however point out that stylised language of Caṅkam poets could not have been the language of the common

speech of the day; and Tiruvalluvar in his eclectic attitude must have preferred to write in the natural language of the day. In any case, one cannot place Tiruvalluvar much later than the closing years of the Caṅkam age in the 3rd century; for it preserves certain aspects of the older language in spite of its acceptance of new developments in the language.

#### 1.4

If Dr. Pope hears echoes of the Sermon on the Mountain in Tirukkuṟaḷ, others hear echoes from Jains and claim Vaḷḷuvar as a Jain. References had been made to Cakravarthi Nayanar's views. The Jain commentary on Nīlakēci-t-tiraṭṭu of the 14th century speaks of Tirukkuṟaḷ as "our authority," probably claiming it as a Jain work. Maṇimēkalai, an aggressive Buddhistic epic, quotes from Tirukkuṟaḷ and praises Vaḷḷuvar as 'Poyyil Pulavar', suggesting that Vaḷḷuvar had the real Buddhistic vision. Vaiṣṇavite Ālvārs and Tēvāram writers have borrowed phrases from Tirukkuṟaḷ. Śaivite philosophical works like Tirukkaḷṟṟu-p-paṭiyār seem to suggest that they are quoting the verses from Tirukkuṟaḷ as though it was their Śaivite Bible. In short, one may state that all the religions and philosophies of Tamil land interpret Tirukkuṟaḷ as though it were their respective authority.

This is the first great difficulty that one encounters in attempting to understand the philosophy of Tirukkuṟaḷ. But, there is a way out of this difficulty. 'The conflicting philosophers however accept Tirukkuṟaḷ as an authority', thus sings Tiruvalluva Mālai [Verse 9]. Kallāṭam also states the same fact. This work also praises it as the all comprehensive quintessence of all

the important religions and philosophies, quintessence expressed in the clearest and the most attractive manner [Verse Nos. 3, 13, 18, 24, 29, 30, 32, 35, 40, 41, 42, 44, 46, 49, 50, 51, 53]. Tiruvaḷḷuva Mālai was probably written by the Hindus. Therefore, according to that book, Tirukkuṟaḷ is a summary of the Vedas [Verse Nos. 4, 6, 8, 24, 28, 42, 53]. Not only does it compare Tirukkuṟaḷ with the Vēdas, but it also points out the superiority of Tirukkuṟaḷ, in that it is available to all, irrespective of their caste [Verse Nos. 15, 23, 33, 43]. This trend of thought will refuse to accept Vaḷḷuvar as a sectarian or as a philosopher belonging to any established school of thought. This is justified by the fact that he does not expound any sectarian view or any particular school of thought. Attempts have been made to rely on certain phrases to prove his attachment to a particular school of thought, but they have not been accepted as conclusive by many scholars. The most that the phrases may show is Vaḷḷuvar's familiarity with, and the provisional acceptance of, certain ideas as his own, in conformity with his eclectic approach. The fact that there is not a single definite phrase to help one to label him as a Jain or Buddhist or Vaiṣṇavite or Śaivite is significant. It is clear, therefore, that he is refusing to be labelled.

## 1.5

Contact with another culture and civilization is often responsible for a vigorous growth of a civilization and culture. This happened in Greece, in England and in other places of the world. The great Renaissance is the most striking example. The contact with Northern India, especially the two great missionary

religions of Jainism and Buddhism, the contact with the West through trade, and the contact with the Eastern Islands through trade and colonisation, were all responsible for stimulating a new growth in Tamil land which is found in its Caṅkam literature, which represents a new historical development and a new trend in civilization and culture. Do we not see in Modern India the same kind of new developments thanks to the Western impact?

This kind of explanation is sometimes resented by a newly developing Nationalism, especially, when the people of the other civilization and culture are intolerantly assuming airs. It is only after the proud Britisher had left India that we are giving free expressions to our own indebtedness to the English language and literature and to the Western science. Similarly, the Aryan cult which reached its zenith and climax in Hitler was responsible—perhaps it is even now responsible—for the other culture protesting against the implied assumption of any inferiority of their cultures. This kind of false nationalism both ways, sometimes affects real research, as may be seen, in many parts of the world, and in many periods of history.

The stimulus given by a foreign contact does not necessarily end in mere imitation. Aping of any other nation cannot amount to an original contribution to the development of culture and civilization. There will be some amount of imitation, often at the surface level, which is more or less prejudicial to that society itself. One may refer to the popularity of the Greek wines in the Caṅkam age. But this is not the kind of lasting influence we are referring to. The foreign

influence worth mentioning, however, acts in a different way. It is not only adopted but adapted to the native genius of the country which feels that influence. Often, on account of this impact, there is also a resistance to the foreign influence; and this resistance often takes the shape of pointing out that the good things in the foreign culture are already there in the native culture and that the glory of the native culture is that it avoids the dangerous trends in the foreign culture. This is in a way, the adoption of the good effects of the foreign culture, or an attempt at showing that a foreign culture is not really foreign. What is after all attributed here to the foreign contact is its action as a stimulus; but the response may be, as it always happens in man, as varied and as unexpected. If this is understood, there should be no real objection, even from the point of view of national purity, to the study of the foreign influences on one's own culture. Instead of speaking in terms of foreign influence, it may be safer to speak in terms of time spirit or *weltenschuang*.

## 1.6

Here alone a difficulty may be explained. The authors like Parimēlalakar of medieval times, or like Dr. S. Krishnasamy Ayyangar, V.R. Ramachandra Dikshitar and K.V. Rangaswami Ayyangar of modern times have compared Tirukkuraḷ with Sanskrit works and have even profusely quoted from Tirukkuraḷ which seem to them to be echoes of the Sanskrit verses. Great minds often think alike, especially within a common culture and within a common frame work of thought. Perhaps there is more than what can be attributed to this kind of happy accident. Some may be ideas

from the South itself, though expressed in Sanskrit, the then *lingua franca* of India. Further, the Tamilians of that age kept open their intellectual windows to light and air from all quarters of the world. A hybrid compound of a native word with a foreign word was avoided as *arisamāsa* in Telugu and Kannada; but Caṅkam literature which has compounds like ‘*tacanāṅku*’ did not completely eschew them. The relative construction, though developed to a certain extent in later Tamil, is not native to the Dravidian family of languages, in general and Tamil in particular. Tirukkuṟaḷ, writing in an epigrammatic style, finds a use for this construction.

“ *yātāṇi yātāṇi nīṅkiyān nōtal*  
*atāṇi atāṇi ilaṇ.* ” (341)

Therefore one should not be surprised if there are even Tamil verses which echo the best verses from outside. The famous verse of Avvaiyār,

“ *nāṭā koṇṟō kāṭā koṇṟō*  
*micaiyā koṇṟō avalā koṇṟō*  
*eṅvaḷi nallavar āṭavar*  
*avvaḷi nallai vāḷiya nilaṇē.* ”

seems to be on all fours with the 98th verse in Damma pāda—

“ *gāmē vā yadi varaññē*  
*ninnē va yadi vā thalē*  
*yathārahantō viharanti*  
*tam bhūmim ramaṇeyakam.* ”

But even here Avvai makes the idea poetical. It is no longer a prosaic statement glorifying the Arhats; but a

beautiful address to the land itself, so as to bring out the full significance of the word *bhūmi* in the original, where probably it means no more than a spot. It is possible that the Tamil verse went into Pāli; but that will be too difficult to prove in the present state of our knowledge. We must remember the motto of the Tamilians of that age,

“yātum ūrē yāvarum kēḷir” (Puṇam 192)

“Every place is our birth place and every one is our kith and kin.” Tirukkuṟaḷ also proclaims this truth as a well-accepted one.

“yātānum nāṭāmāl ūrāmāl .....” [397]

“Every country becomes our mother land; every village becomes our own native village”. Is not Tirukkuṟaḷ’s ideal, in this sphere, crystal clear?

“epporuḷ ettaṇmait tāyiṇum apporuḷ  
meypporuḷ kāṇpa taṟivu. [355]

“epporuḷ yāryārvāy - k - kēṭpiṇum apporuḷ  
meypporuḷ kāṇpa taṟivu.” [423]

This kind of give and take happens in any living language and culture. But the idea behind the writings of Parimēlaḷakar seems to be that Tirukkuṟaḷ is a wholesale rendering into Tamil of the Sanskrit works. In an age where as in the period of Sanskrit revival, after the first onslaught on the Tamilian intellectual world, by the invasion of Malik Kafur, the Sanskrit studies were encouraged to such an extent as to decry Tamil works and Tamil studies. Tamilian writers like Parimēlaḷakar, Naccīṇārkkīṇiyar and Aḷakiya Maṇavāḷa

Nāyanār had to defend their Tamil culture and studies by showing that the Tamil works are expressing the great truths of the Sanskrit lore, from a universal point of view, and in a democratic way and that therefore Tamil works and Tamil studies are equally important. With that view, they had to point out that Tamil works did not differ from the Sanskrit authorities. They had often not only pointed out the similarities but also had to reinterpret the Tamil verses on the basis of Sanskrit works. It was an age when, as stated in Siddhānta Lēsa of Appayya Dīkṣitar, there were schools of thought, which emphasised that philosophy should be studied in Sanskrit and not in other languages; for, these schools were afraid of the popularity of the Tamil songs of Ālvārs working against the popularity of Sanskrit works and studies. They therefore went to the extent of condemning the greatness of even Tiruvāymoḷi on the ground that Nammālvār was not a Brahmin and that Tamil in which he wrote was after all a creation of Agastya unlike Sanskrit which they claimed to be eternal. In such an intellectual climate these Tamil commentators had first of all to explain the similarity with Sanskrit before they could emphasise the greatness of Tamil works on the basis of universalism. Once this is understood, the way will be clear for a much more independent interpretation of Tirukkuraḷ in modern times, when there is no such constraint.

In the Twentieth century, there arose an aggressive Aryan cult, perhaps as a first reaction to the foreign contact with India. But this Aryan cult simply meant

the Indian cult, though unfortunately the words Aryan and Dravidian, in spite of Max Müller's disclaimer, continue to have a racial significance. The Sanskrit language and study have to contend against the much more popular and natural study of the regional languages all over India. But in Tamil land, unfortunately on account of the continuance, at least in some quarters, of the spirit which Parimēlaḷakar and others opposed, and of the unfortunate and false identification of Sanskrit with Brahminism, the political and social conflict between Brahmins and Non-Brahmins led also to intellectual and literary developments, which from either side embittered the whole controversy. This has certainly coloured the study of Tirukkuraḷ in recent times. But it should not be thought that even this conflict had not thrown new light on Kuraḷ. During the days of our Freedom fight, the spirit of independence pervaded all our aspects of life, not only political but also literary, social and economic. We enjoy a freedom of thought unheard of in the recent past. This is a national asset; but there is still an intolerance and resulting bitterness of feeling at least in the unconscious mind of both the exponents of conservatism and of progressivism. It is this unconscious bias which is seen in the recent interpretations of Kuraḷ by each one of the two sides.

### 1.7

But in the intellectual world, whatever may happen in the political or social world, there is no place for going behind the words and suspecting any bias or prejudice. In an atmosphere of freedom, we must welcome all kinds

of interpretations and criticise them dispassionately, only from the intellectual point of view.

Research worships truth alone as its God. But research scholars, being human, it is not always possible to escape the prevailing intellectual climate. Fortunately, in the present juncture of the twentieth century, in spite of its being overcast by a gloom of the cold war, there is a ray of hope in the achievements of Man translating the idea of the one world into a reality.

In India itself, in spite of the Non-Brahmin—Brahmin movement, and the linguistic and regional tension, its fundamental unity and its mission of universalism were realised during the Freedom struggle; and the recent Chinese aggression has emphasised this unity and has opened our eyes to the wonderful beauty of the mosaic pattern of the great Indian culture to which each region and language have contributed their best, so as to evolve this unique, unity in variety. From this point of view, the love of one's own region and of one's own language appears in reality as the love for this unity. Each one of the many languages has been attempting and finding separately in itself, the expression of this unity all through its history—a unity which is at the same time national and international. The history of India is really the history of this movement towards universalism and harmony—internal and external peace or *Sānti*.

1.8

Man expresses himself in language; and therefore, a study of his language is necessary for understanding

this history of his culture. Unfortunately, the history of this country and the history of the various languages, have been written from the point of view of conflicts, where one misses not only the common and unifying trends but also any progression, all of which, however, become crystal clear once that history is attempted to be read as the history of a growing harmonisation. Perhaps, this is the best cure for the evils of regionalism and linguism.

At first sight, Tamil seems to revolt against this harmony. Looking at the alphabets of India, one finds that except Tamil, all the others have provided letters for all the sounds of the Sanskrit language in their own alphabets, intended for writing their respective languages. But a deeper insight into Tamil language shows a greater harmony at a higher level of thought. It is not a revolt against unity but against dead uniformity. The wholesale adoption of sounds, foreign to the language is no praiseworthy imitation. In spite of this, the ordinary man in the street speaking those other languages has not absorbed those foreign sounds in his native speech. Therefore, these alphabets remain a close preserve of the learned in their ivory tower. In Tamil, this kind of imitation did not strike any root even in the learned style. Though what is called the *Maṇḍpravaṇa* style, a style born of the conscious and studied commingling of Tamil phrases and Sanskrit phrases in equal proportions, both written and pronounced as in their original idioms and sounds, was yet slowly becoming popular at a particular period of history

of Tamil language amongst the learned, yet it remained only as an attempt, not always successful, by the learned Sanskritists to reach the ordinary language of the common man.

The conception of Ubhaya Vēdānta—the Vēdānta in Sanskrit and Tamil—should be emphasised at this point. This was not restricted to the Vaiṣṇavites alone, though they alone honoured the scholars with this title. The saints and seers of Tamil land, seeing God everywhere, were democratic to the core, in the real spiritual sense of that term and were universal in their appeal. They saw God both in the Sanskrit language and in the Tamil language. No higher place, therefore, was tolerated for the Sanskritists. This may look like a revolt, but in reality, is only a remonstrance against the pride of the learned, though again only, with a view to establish a harmony of these two languages, as the expressions of the divine in man. The language of the common man was thus deified; and he was made conscious of being the mouthpiece of this divine speech. Here is therefore the glorification of the common man. In spite of the differences in idiom, differences in approach, and differences in rituals, these great men emphasise the fundamental unity underlying the great literatures in Tamil and Sanskrit. From this fundamental point of view, there is no difference between man and man, language and language, and region and region.

Man's real personality, according to them, consists in the expression of universal love or Bhakti, seeing God everywhere in the world and in Man. This Bhakti movement, thus universalised and democratised, spread

all over India. From this point of view, we have to assess and value the philosophical movements which started in Southern India and spread all over this great country. Rāmānuja, as interpreted by his followers, attempted to explain the Sanskrit Vēdas from the point of view of the songs of Ālvārs. A similar interpretation may be revealed by future research in the works of Śaṅkara who also belongs to the Tamil country of those days. Soundaryalahari refers to the Tamil saint Tiruñānacampantar and tempts us to conclude that, whether that work is that of the original Śaṅkara or one of his immediate followers, Śaṅkara's school at an early date was familiar with the songs of Tamil saints.

This Bhakti movement, inspired by what Tirumūlar describes as 'Anpē civam' 'Love is God', should trace its origin to an earlier period when love, though not made divine, was idealised. We should also trace its origin to, what may be called, an earlier and more widespread Humanism, for want of a better term. Here, we go back to a period where moral life was held as an ideal with all its wealth of variety and significance in human life. This is the universal folk-lore, consciously felt, interpreted and preached as a new message in books like Tirukkuṛaḷ. Schweitzer was surprised at the world affirming philosophy of Kuṛaḷ in the midst of world negating philosophies of India. But, this is once again to emphasise the conflict and to miss the real greatness of Kuṛaḷ which lies in its success in achieving a harmony of seemingly conflicting philosophies. This universalism is due to a great extent to the influence of Jainism and

Buddhism in the Tamil country. The fundamental principles, not their dogmas or creeds, were absorbed, in their pristine purity, by the folk-lore as interpreted by the great minds of Tamil land, especially, Tiruvalluvar. Their democratic spirit was also absorbed; but the aristocratic spirit was also not forgotten which was sublimated into an aristocracy of moral greatness and supreme self-sacrifice, shorn of all pride and prejudice. The contact with the East and the West and the foreign trade, made Tamilians of the Caṅkam age realise, in spite of certain intolerance shown here and there, the greatness and worth of other ways of life and other kinds of thought. All these have here to be remembered, when we study the philosophy of Tirukkuraḷ. It is fortunate that the intellectual and emotional climate is favourable for that approach, at the present moment, though we cannot but regret the Chinese aggression which, mysteriously enough, has opened our eyes to the importance of this fundamental approach.

India is a cultural area and this is reflected in its being a linguistic area. The languages spoken here belong to different families, which are not, according to our present knowledge, capable of being proved to be genetically related. In spite of this, all of them have developed more or less a common syntactic structure, a limited common vocabulary and even a few common sounds like the so called cerebrals. In all these cases, it must be admitted, there was the potentiality in the respective languages for these developments and the external influence has simply hastened the process or

given the necessary directions or made patent what was latent. From one point of view, this may be looked upon, as an internal development, though from another point of view, it is the result of external influences. Any cultural development is always of this kind, especially in an area which is exposed to various kinds of influences. No living organism can escape this kind of development and growth. A plant rooted well in the ground and remaining true to its species, still draws and absorbs all that it can, from the changing atmosphere around it and, as a result, it has to change and develop according to its environments. The same is the case with a living culture or a living language.

## 1.9

Therefore, one should not be surprised, to find in the unique Tamil culture of the Caṅkam age, the traces, over and above what has already been said, of foreign influences which acted as a catalytic agent for new developments, even if they have not directly influenced this culture. There are references to Yavanas, their wine, their artistic lamps and chains. There is a reference to the spices brought from Eastern islands bearing the names of the places of their origin, like *arumanam* and *takkōlam*. There is a story of the ancestors of Atikamāṇ bringing the sugar-cane from the East. There are references to Pataliputra and Banaras, to the Ganges and the Himalayas. A poet speaks of the *yak* cow dreaming of the crystal-clear waters of the Himalayas and the rich grasses, while sleeping under the kindly protection of the great sages kindling their sacrificial fire. The southern kings of the Tamil country

had the ideal of an empire extending from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas where they believed their ancestors had engraved their royal insignia as though it were the boundary stone of their empire. Indian mythological stories as that of Krishna, Rama and Śiva are also very familiar to the Caṅkam age. The kings like Palyākacālai Mutukuṭumi-p-Peru Vaḷuti, Irācacūyam Vēṭṭa Perunaṇ Kiḷḷi, performed *vedic* sacrifices. The language also reveals this kind of contact; and Tolkāppiyar, the earliest grammarian, finds that northern words have a place in Tamil literary compositions (Tol. 880).

### 1.10

All these should not be looked upon as entirely foreign. The so-called Aryan culture of the North is itself a commingling of all the different people including, to a major extent, those related to the Southerners. Therefore, to talk of the contact between the North and the South, as that of a contact of the Aryans and the Dravidians, is to introduce dangerous racial implications and unnecessary emotional conflicts. This commingling has been going on for such a long time that it is impossible to say which is Aryan and which is Dravidian, in the mosaic pattern of the culture, even if it is possible to speak of the Aryans and Dravidians as two different races. If one were to call this commingling Aryani-sation, it is equally correct to call it Dravidianisation. In reality it is the growth and development of the harmonious Indian culture.

### 1.11

The influence of Jainism and Buddhism hastened or quickened this process of Indianisation in its universal

aspect. They were missionary religions; and therefore they were bent upon the expansion of their domain of influence. Some of the names of the Caṅkam poets like Ulōccaṇār, probably to be traced to the Jain penance 'lōc' and Iḷampōtiyār, probably to be connected with Buddhism, prove, beyond any shadow of doubt, that these two religions must have influenced the Caṅkam thought. The Brahmi Tamil Inscriptions of the caves of the Southern districts of the first three centuries B. C., further strengthen this position. Thanks to the spread of Buddhism in the East, people, even from distant China, looked upon India as a whole, as the divine country of the Buddha; and pilgrims like Hieun Ts'ang, Fahien and It-sing came to India as seekers after further light and truth. It is in this context that Sanskrit and Pali became the *lingua franca* of the Buddhist world and therefore of India. When Buddhism lost its influence, Sanskrit completely replaced Pali. Therefore, we find people from all parts of India writing earlier in Pali or Prakrit and later in Sanskrit, even as the present generation uses English for such a purpose. Though their writings are not available, honourable mention is made in later commentaries to Ācārya Sundara Pāṇḍiya and the revered Dravida Ācārya. This clearly shows that even in the pre-Śaṅkara period, the people of the Tamil land including its kings, contributed their best to Sanskrit, and that these contributions were highly valued by the great philosophers of India. Dandin and others are really representing the Southern or Tamilian culture. The *tokai nilai-c-ceyyu* or anthologies he refers to, as a distinct piece of literature, is doubtless based upon the existence of *Eṭṭuttokai* in Tamil language, with which he was familiar. Therefore it will be an interesting study to find out the

distinctive features of the works in Sanskrit, owing their origin to the Tamil or Southern region. Sanskrit works should be studied region-war and author-war; for there is no such thing as a common Sanskrit philosophy apart from the common Indian culture. To speak of any individual Sanskrit philosophy, on the basis of language alone as the Sanskrit philosophy is as misleading as to speak of Tamil philosophy. Therefore when Parimēlaḷakar, the great and respected commentator on Tiruvaḷḷuvar, speaks of '*Vaṭanūḷ matam*', "the Sanskrit philosophy" it is very difficult to understand him. Sanskrit has become the vehicle of various conflicting philosophies like Jainism, Buddhism and Hinduism. So also Tamil has become such a vehicle. Therefore instead of speaking of any one philosopher or a school of philosophy, to talk of any one language as propounding any well known philosophy, is very misleading. But this is not to deny that in spite of the common Indian culture, the various language cultures often differ in the emphasis they lay on particular aspects of this common core, not as creating any conflict, but as enriching from their own particular points of view, the rich feast of a varied but harmonious culture. Though all love the common gold of this culture, each one has its own peculiar taste for particular forms and beauties of the regional ornaments made out of this pure gold.

The conception of the *puruṣārthas* — the *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Mōkṣa* — is the Pan-Indian conception, which colours all the religions and philosophies of India. We have *Dharma* sūtras and *Dharma* śāstras implying a development in their study. Similarly we have *Artha* sūtras and *Artha* śāstras and *Kāma* sūtras

and *Kāma śāstras*. There are also books on ‘*Mōkṣa*’ each according to the different philosophies. This four-fold division is accepted by all in India, though they differ in the particular emphasis they lay on each one of them with reference to their superiority or inferiority in the scale of their values. *Mōkṣa* for the chosen few and the other three for all the people are therefore of universal importance, subject to the differing scales of their values. Therefore, there is a conception of *trivarga*, a term which we can compare with the term *Mupṭāl* which is another name for *Kuṣaḷ*. Even the Jains have a number of works on *trivarga*. *Tolkāppiyam* which is considered by most scholars to be the earliest available Tamil work refers to “*inṭamum poruḷum aṟanum enṛāṅku*” and therefore this conception is found in the earliest Tamil work. *Puṟam* refers to this *trivarga* emphasising *Dharma* controlling the other two.

“*ciṟappuṭai marapiṇ poruḷum inṭamum  
aṟattu vaḷi-p-paṭūm tōṟṟam pōla*” [*Puṟam* 31]

“Even as the *Kāma* and *Artha* of the great tradition follow the path of *Dharma*.” The importance of this quotation is that this conception is so popular that the poet uses this as a simile. Nobody can pretend that this conception can be traced back to the Indo-European common culture. Nor can it be traced back to the Proto-Dravidian culture. It has to be, therefore, accepted as something peculiar to the Indian soil, a common product of all the people belonging to this land.

### 1.12

Sometimes it is asserted that the conception of *Puruṣārtha* is Aryan and that the Tamilian conception,

however, consists in visualising, not a four-fold goal, but a two-fold goal—*Akam* and *Puṛam*. Really *Akam* and *Puṛam* are the two aspects of life. But this is a literary theory rather than a philosophical principle. It is true that the four-fold goal of life has come to be accepted even in the literary theory of a later age in the Tamil land “*aṛam, poruḷ, inṇam, viṭataital nūṛṇpayanē*” [Nannūḷ Sūtra 10], “The result of the mastery of a book is the achievement of *Dharma, Artha, Kāma* and *Mōkṣa*.” Even Tolkāppiyar seems to suggest that he is equating the conception of *Akam* and *Puṛam*, with the conception of *trivarga*. ‘*Inṇam*’ is equated with *Akam* and therefore it has been explained by others that *Puṛam* has to be equated with *Aṛam* and *Poruḷ*. Both the conceptions are as old as Tolkāppiyam; and from the way in which Tolkāppiyam refers to them, it is clear, they were popular in Tamil land with Tamil names. Therefore beyond concluding that the conception of *trivarga* is Pan-Indian, nothing more definite can be stated at the present moment. As already stated, though the conception is Pan-Indian, the particular emphasis laid by various schools of thought on the different aspects of this conception creates various pictures with different shades and lights. When one considers these different shades, one finds the original contributions of various authors and the schools of thought.

When coming to equate the *Puruṣārtha* with *Akam* and *Puṛam*, the conception of the four goals avoids certain interpretations forced on it. Sometimes the emphasis is laid on any one of the four. There are philosophers who will consider *Mōkṣa* as the most important goal; the *lōkāyataṣ* may consider happiness

or the physical pleasures as their goal. The politicians and political philosophers like Kautilya may consider *Artha* or *Poruḷ* as the real goal of human life. There are others like the authors of *Dharma Sāstras* who will hold *Dharma* as the only goal of human life. But when we look at the conception of *Akam* and *Puṇam*, they are but the internal and external aspects of one and the same human life which cannot be separated by any means, because they form the two sides, as it were, of one and the same coin. All the aspects of the external life have their corresponding internal aspect. From this point of view, human life is worth that name, only when all the aspects of human personality are harmoniously developed to perfection, during the course of one's own life. Everything finds its suitable and proper place in the scheme of things, where there is no over-indulgence or repression of natural and innocent pleasures of life. There is no distortion but only a complete harmony. It is from this point of view that we have to understand the distinction between *Peruṅkāṇṇiyam* and *Ciṟukāṇṇiyam* made by Dandin who, as already pointed out, had a knowledge of Tamil. The epic which emphasises this harmony of all the four goals of life is the Great Epic, to be really so called. But the Epic which falls short of it and fails to emphasise any one of the four goals of life is to that extent an inferior variety of epic. This, of course, is a later explanation; but theory of *Akam* and *Puṇam* implies this even in *Tolkāṇṇiyam*. Therefore a Jain ascetic like Tiruttakka Tēvar, when he came to write an epic, emphasises this all round perfection of human personality in his hero. Though the epic ends in glorifying the final renunciation resulting in the deification of his hero *Civakan*, it is explained as

a natural development of that personality which has enjoyed the world in all its aspects in their full richness. There is no forced repression, no negativism ; there is a natural ripening of universalism of spirit from the previous stages of limited horizons. Even as anything held in one's hand falls away of its own accord, when one sleeps, the attachment to and hankering for anything whatsoever disappear after a complete rich enjoyment of life. After attaining the freedom of salvation, there is no further seeking after pleasures. This has to be borne in mind when we study the philosophy of Tiruvaḷḷuvar. *Kāmattuppāl* is a pure variety of *Akam* following the best traditions of the Caṅkam age.

There is another light thrown on this conception of *Puruṣārthas* by the literary theory of *Akam* and *Puṇam*. *Tolkāppiyam*, though speaking of *Aṇam*, *Poruḷ*, *Inṇam*, includes *Mōkṣa* within these three. That means the four-fold goal of life is looked upon as only a three-fold goal.

“ kāmāñ cāṇṇa kaṭai-k-kōṭ kālai  
ēmañ cāṇṇa makkaḷoṭu tuvaṇṇi  
aṇampuri cuṇṇamoṭu kiḷavaṇum kiḷattiyum  
ciṇantatu paylṇṇal iṇantataṇ payaṇē. ”

[Tol. 1138]

“ After the perfection of *Kāmam* or happiness is achieved, the hero and the heroine, joined with their children, perfect in the path of safety and happiness and surrounded by the relatives who are actuated by *Dharma*, practise what is the best ; and this is the result of all their past (strivings)” is said to emphasise the great truth that the final goal of married life is not merely the perfection of the individual or the family but of universal salvation.

*Dharma* or *Aṛam* has a wider and a narrower significance. *Dharma* may mean one of the four goals of life or it may mean the behaviour inspired by an ideal in all walks of life where all the four goals become *Dharma*. As a part of this latter conception, the Jains and Buddhists will not lay the emphasis on *Artha* and *Kāma* and therefore will speak of *Dharma* and *Mōkṣa* as the *Dharma par excellence*. They speak of *Mōkṣa Dharma* to which end the old *Aṛam* or *Dharma* in the limited sense becomes but a means. Even Mahābhāratha speaks of *Mōkṣa Dharma*. The Buddhist influence might have been felt even in Tolkāppiyam. However, the general and fundamental basis of the *Akam* and *Puṛam* conception contemplates this wider outlook. *Vākai* or victory represents an ideal of life. There are two aspects of this victory. One is called *Mullai* and the other the *Vākai* proper. *Mullai* is something innate or natural. The perfection achieved by men or women—the perfection of their natural endowments—is *Mullai*. *Vākai* is victory achieved in discharging duties undertaken according to the varying status in life and achieved against odds. Here there is nothing inferior or superior in the acts *per se* but only in the successful discharge of one's duties. Men are equal and this is a divine equality. But this democracy has a place for the moral aristocracy.

“piṛappokku mellā vuyirkkuñ cīṛappovvā  
ceytoḷil vēṛṛumai yān”.

“Birth (or body) is common to all living beings in general. But they are not equal in their specific greatness. This greatness is achieved only because of

the difference in their activities or pursuits.” Here comes the victory of the king and other officers of State including various citizens of the State. Here comes also the victory of the seer and the sage who are released from the fetters of the smaller ego and who identify themselves with the universe. “*aruḷoṭu puṇarnta akaṇṇi*” (Tol. 1022), “The renunciation inspired by universal love.”; “*kāmam nītta pāl*” (Tol. 1022) “That aspect of human life which renounces the sexual pleasures” — are referred to here. There is also “*poruḷoṭu puṇarnta paṅkam*” (Tol. 1022) “That aspect of human life inspired by *Poruḷ* or *Artha*” (this is interpreted also as that aspect of life inspired by the real Thing that is *Jñāna*).

These phrases are interpreted by commentators on the basis of the structure of Tirukkuṟaḷ. Therefore *Mōkṣa Dharma* is also treated under *Dharma* or *Puṇam*. Parimēlaḷakar in explaining the absence of a fourth part on *Mōkṣa* in Kuṟaḷ, states that the fourth goal is beyond words and mind and that therefore it can be explained only in terms of its means viz., *Tuṟavaṇam* or “renunciation” which leads to that final goal. Whatever that be, it is clear that the four goals can be and ought to be explained in terms of the three. This explanation is made clearer in the Tiruvalluva Mālai which further goes to claim that everything great in *Vēdas* and in this world come under these three.

“*nāṇmaṟaiyiṇ meypporuḷai mupporuḷā*  
 .....*tanturaitta nūṇmuṟai*” (4)

“*āṇā aṟamutal annāṇkum—ēṇōrkku*  
*ūḷiṇ uraittāṇ*” (7)

“ aṛam poruḷ inṇam vīṭennum annānkin  
tiṛam terintu ceppiya tēvai ” (8)

“ palkalai.....arumaṛai,  
poṛṛi uraitta poruḷ ellām tōṛṛavē ” (18)

“ muppāl moḷinta mutarṇpāvalar ” (18)

“ muppālil nāṛpāl moḷintavar ” (19)

“ mūnṛena-p-pakuti ceytu peṛalariya  
nālum moḷinta perunāvalar ” (22)

“ inṇam poruḷaṛam vīṭu ennum innānkum  
koḷlamoḷintār kuṛaḷ ” (33)

“ aṛa mutal nānkum akaliṭattōr ellām  
tiṛa muṛa-t-tērntu teḷiya-k-kuḷaintu veṇpā-p-  
panniya vaḷḷuvanār ” (38)

“ ....mummaiyin  
vīṭavaṛṇin nānkin viti vaḷaṅka vaḷḷuvanār  
pāṭinar inkuṛaḷ veṇpā ” (40)

“ muppāli nōtum  
taruma mutal nānkum...vaḷḷuvar  
punti moḷinta poruḷ ” (44)

“ aṛaṇaṛintēm ānṛa poruḷaṛintēm inṇin  
tiṛaṇaṛintēm, vīṭu teḷintēm - vaḷḷuvanār  
...tamvāyār kēḷātana ellām kēṭṭu ” (50)

“ This book in its organisation of subject matter expounds all the great truths of the *Vēdas* as the three great truths. ” (4)

“ He has told others those four, in the natural order beginning with infinite *Dharma*. ” (7)

“ The Divine Man who has expounded after having understood their intricacies those four, namely *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Mōkṣa*. ” ( 8 )

“ He has expressed in such a way that truth which was reverentially expressed by the rare *Vēdas* and the many arts. ” ( 18 )

“ The first great poet who has expounded the *trivarga*. ” ( 18 )

“ He who expounded within his *trivarga* the four *Puruṣārthas*. ” ( 19 )

“ He is the great Lord of speech who has classified the four great (truths), which are difficult of achievement, and expounded them as the three. ” ( 22 )

“ He has composed his *Kuṛaḷ* so that all may understand and accept these four viz., *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Mōkṣa* ” ( 33 )

“ Vaḷḷuvar, who out of the tender love of his heart, has composed and expounded in *venṇpā* metre the truths, so that all the people of this great expanse of this world may understand and realise all the intricacies of the four (great truths) beginning with *Dharma*. ” ( 38 )

“ This is the book of sweet *Kuṛaḷ venṇpās*, composed by Vaḷḷuvar, so as to explain the rules of the four great truths ending with *Mōkṣa*, within the three-fold (classification of his). ” ( 40 )

“ This expounding of the four great Truths beginning with *Dharma*, is the great idea of Vaḷḷuvar's intellect. ( 44 )

“ We have heard from Valluvar's mouth everything — things which were not heard of till now like this. And we have understood *Dharma*. We have understood *Artha*. We have understood all the aspects of *Kāma*. We have realised clearly, without any confusion, what is *Mōkṣa*. ” (50)

We do not know how far the claim made by these verses is true but they seem to suggest that the exposition of the *Puruṣārthas*, as the three-fold *trivargas* is a great contribution of Tiruvaḷḷuvar. His is an attempt at harmonising the Tāmilian conception of *Akam* and *Puṇam* with *Puruṣārthas*. This harmony is hinted at in Tolkāppiyam itself; but it is Tiruvaḷḷuvar who, according to Tiruvaḷḷuva Mālai in expounding the *Puruṣārthas*, has boldly classified them under the *trivarga*. It is not a neglect of the path of *Mōkṣa* but a way of making it the inspiration, the basis and the consummation of all the other three.

*Vākai*, according to Tolkāppiyar, is the external aspect of the life for which *Pālai* or separation in love is the internal aspect. Here, both in *Vākai* and *Pālai*, is a spirit of self sacrifice or an effacement of the selfish interest in the cause of greater values. This wider conception of *Vākai* or victory must imply a wider conception of war, not merely restricted to the battle field, but extended to all aspects, not only of the struggle for existence but also of the striving for perfection — physical, moral, intellectual. The realisation of the eternal values distinguished from evanescent values of the world is emphasised

almost in a world-negating vein in Tolkāppiyar's conception of Kāñci-one of the seven aspects of life. Man's life was considered fruitless if it was not sung by poets; and the true fame of poetic renown forms Pāṭāṇ-another of the seven aspects of life. *Aṛam* is contrasted with Paḷi or infamy suggesting that *Aṛam* is *Pukaḷ* or Fame.

“ceyaṛpāla tōṛum aṛaṇē oruvaṛku  
uṛpāla tōṛum paḷi” [40]

“What ought to be performed is *Dharma*. What ought to be escaped from is infamy.” This is another Caṅkam conception. The importance of these conceptions should be fully understood for appreciating the approach of Tiruvaḷḷuvar. His conception of the *Puruṣārthas* is thus really shaped by the ancient Tamilian tradition.

The internal and external aspects are also emphasised by Tiruvaḷḷuvar. *Aṛam* may be the outward behaviour of what has to be done — “*ceyaṛpālatu*.” But without the inner inspiration and purity it has no significance whatsoever. This aspect will have to be borne in mind; and *Inṇam* may from that point of view receive a wider significance; for one must enquire what is the inner aspect of *Kāmam nīttapāl* and *Aruḷoṭu puṇarnta akaṛci* above referred to in Tolkāppiyam.

### 1.13

There are two ways of approaching these goals of life. Though one speaks of the goals, usually it is only the various aspects of and expressions in life

along with their means that are described. There may be a descriptive and prescriptive approach; or there may be a normative and idealistic approach. The descriptive approach will be the approach of the scientist. The prescriptive approach will be that of the law givers. The normative approach will be either as describing the ideal or as elucidating the inner inspiration and explaining the practical way of achieving the ideal. Vaḷḷuvar's is the latter approach and as a result he is neither concerned with any historical state of society with its laws and practices, nor with the scientific and objective description of all aspects, without reference to higher values, nor is he indulging in the impossibilities of life. He is thus practical and at the same time idealistic. Though practical from this point of view, he is not objective as a scientist nor as a codifier of laws. His approach is universal, fettered by the conditions of no particular country or age. This distinguishes Kuṛaḷ from other *Dharma śāstrās*, *Artha śāstrās* and *Kāma śāstras*. Reference had been made to the universalism of Tirukkuṛaḷ praised by others and this universalism is the result of this peculiar approach, which will be made clearer in the study of the three-fold aspects of Kuṛaḷ.

1.14

In the result, it is proposed to study the philosophy of Tirukkuṛaḷ within the pan-Indian theory of *Puruṣārthas*. The works available in Sanskrit are many whilst the earliest works in Tamil are Tolkāppiyam and Caṅkam literature. This does not amount to forcing the Sanskrit theories on the study of Tiruvaḷḷuvar. There is no reason why Tiruvaḷḷuvar should be assumed to have no knowledge of Sanskrit

or of the Pan-Indian conception. Every evaluation of the contributions of an author has to be based on a comparison with any existing scheme. It is for that purpose that the Pan-Indian frame-work is necessary and it is only then that the contributions of Valluvar become clearer and more significant. It has once again to be emphasised that this Pan-Indian frame-work is itself a product of the common efforts of the intellectual world of India spreading from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin and therefore there is no question of any borrowing because it is a common heritage and a common harvest.

It is proposed to deal with the philosophy of Tirukkuraḷ according to the approach explained here, in three parts, since in terms of Valluvar's treatment itself his book falls into three parts. We shall discuss the philosophy of *Dharma*, the philosophy of *Artha* and the philosophy of *Kāma*.

## 2. AṚATTUPPĀL.

### 2.1.1

Tirukkuraḷ consists of three parts. The first part is called Aṛattuppāl, the portion dealing with *Aṛam* or *Dharma*. According to a verse in Tiruvalluva Mālai [25] this part consists of four sub-divisions. The first part comes as an introduction consisting of four chapters. The final sub-division consisting of only one chapter deals with Ūḷ. It is difficult to translate this term. It means ripening or an established order of cause and effect. It evidently refers to the theory of *Karma*. In between these two sub-

divisions come the most important sub-divisions, the first dealing with domestic life and the second with renunciation—the first consisting of twenty chapters and the second of thirteen. Thus Aṟattuppāl consists of 38 chapters in all.

### 2.1.2

The first four chapters which make up an introduction are a puzzle, in relation to the whole book. The first chapter speaks of God or *Kaṭavuḷ*, the second deals with the importance of rains; the third speaks of the greatness of those who have renounced; the last of the four chapters emphasises the *Dharma* or *Aṟam*. Attempts have been made to connect these four topics with *Kaṭavuḷ Vāḷttu*, *Koṭi Nilai*, *Kantaḷi* and *Vaḷḷi* mentioned in *Tolkāppiyam*. But their relevance with reference to the subjects treated in *Tirukkuraḷ* as a whole is not clear. It is for consideration whether these four topics may not refer to God, Nature, the Ideal man and *Dharma* as forming the very basis of this book.

### 2.1.21

God is not defined and therefore, as already pointed out, all the religions have accepted this '*Kaṭavuḷ Vāḷttu*' as equally applicable to their conflicting conceptions of God. It is significant that Vaḷḷuvar uses the phrase '*Āti Pakavaṇu*' in the first *Kuraḷ* itself. The world has God for its beginning, God is pure intelligence; He has no likes and dislikes; He has no comparison; He has the eight great

qualities; He is kind unto all with his *Dharma cakra* or the ocean of *Dharma*. His is the significant glory. His path is that of good conduct. He has destroyed or extinguished the surging selfish desires of sense organs. He is the great ruler or He is omnipotent. He is '*mālar micai ēkināṇ*'. This term is interpreted by Jains as referring to the Godman walking on the flowers spread by gods on his way to Godhood. But others interpret it as referring to God hastening to reside in the lotus of the heart of any Bhakta. The emphasis in all these suggestive descriptions is on God being the very basis of the world, on His perfect qualities, on His unsullied glory, on His kindness and *Dharma*, on the path of the good conduct—wherein selfishness has no place, the path designed by Him or leading to Him. It would be thus seen that this conception of God is related to the conception of *Dharma* in its wider aspect as treated in the whole of *Tirukkuṛaḷ*. He is the very heart of *Dharma* and the universe. He is the guide, friend and philosopher. In any account, His relation to the path of *Dharma* is clear. The non-partisan and universal approach of Tiruvalluvar becomes evident in the Sanskrit phrase "*ādi bhagavan*" (*Āti Pakavaṇ*) which epitomizes all the conceptions of God known to that language.

Tiruvalluvar, as already pointed out, even when he paints the ideal, looks at it from the practical point of view of man. Therefore it will be interesting to study what he points out as the good aspects, flowing from Man surrendering to God. There is the escape from

the Ocean of births which can be achieved only through self-surrender. The *Karmas* do not affect such a great soul. Those who take refuge in His feet feel no misery and experience no mental suffering and anxiety. The term '*nīṭu vālvār*' used twice, has therefore to be interpreted as referring to eternal life which is longer than any life whatsoever. Those who take refuge in the loving Lord of the ocean of *Dharma* cross the other oceans, probably the ocean of *Artha* and the ocean of *Kāma*. Taken in this sense, *Dharma* implies also the greatness of *Artha* and *Kāma*. Without this basis of *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma*, probably, become misleading.

This is a truth which is still further emphasised in the chapter on '*Aṣṭavalīyuruttal*' 'emphasising *Dharma*' and elsewhere. Vaḷḷuvar also feels that all education and knowledge lead to this great centre of pure wisdom of God. In the absence of such surrender to God any education becomes futile. The final goal of all kinds of life is happiness or bliss, free from sufferings and miseries, illusions and *Karma*. It is in short the eternal Life-divine, away from the ocean of birth. Whilst on this path of self-surrender to God, every action of man is correctly oriented towards this ideal of *Dharma*; otherwise the acts are futile. Though it will not be possible to weave out a complete philosophy of God out of these descriptions of God—therefore it is clear that he does not want to do one—his conception of God is that of the ethical and ideal goal.

### 2.1.22

The second chapter deals with the glory of the rains. Tiru. Vi. Ka., understands by this term the great-

ness of God's Śakti or divine grace. Tiruvalluvar is describing a society where agriculture is the pre-eminent occupation. Even in the *Poruṭpāl* he refers to *Uḷavu*, or cultivation; but we have to understand by that *Uḷavu*, human labour in general, illustrated so beautifully well by cultivation. In an agricultural society every thing becomes a gambling in rains. Therefore rain can be taken as representing Nature. In this sense, Nature becomes the concrete basis of *Dharma* as contrasted with the inner divine inspiration of *Dharma*. Rain is the real eternal ambrosia. It is responsible for the food – the grass, the grains—we eat; it itself is the water we drink. It makes possible thus all experiences and itself becomes the thing to be experienced. Without it the monster of hunger will swallow the world. No effort of man is possible without it. Even a blade of grass cannot shoot forth without its help. Even the great expanse of ocean will lose its greatness. Even the offerings to the gods will fail. Good conduct and *Dharma* can have no place where Nature does not smile on man. The importance of Nature as providing the suitable environment for the blossoming of *Dharma* is thus made clear. Valluvar's ethical idealism will therefore tolerate the imperfections of man when struggling against the contrary forces of Nature. Perhaps the idea is that Nature is helpful to us on our way to perfection, without unnecessarily embittering our life by looking upon her as opposed to man. Do not harp on its destructive powers; for, well harnessed she helps you to escape destruction. Nature is not a monster red in its tooth and nail, but a kindly Light leading us on to our ethical ideal, according to the stage of perfection reached by us, in understanding her ways and in utilising her and our knowledge on this great path.

## 2.1.23

The third chapter deals with the greatness of the people who have renounced. Every book accepts the greatness of perfect men. They are the great; the ever-loving; the ever-wise of great deeds. Who can count the number of dead people from the beginning of the world? Who can also recount the greatness of the perfect men? This chapter, as already hinted, emphasises the importance of perfect men, to anyone on the path of achieving human greatness. It is significant that the perfect man is described as one who has renounced. But the question remains what is meant by renunciation: The phrase '*oḷukkattu nīttār*' [*oḷukkam* = conduct, *nīttār* = those who had renounced] is not very clear at first sight; and there are commentators, who will interpret it as referring to renouncing one's own ordinary behaviour or conduct. But Maṇakkuṭavar gives a different interpretation. These are according to him the great men who renounce everything for the sake of good conduct or *Dharma*. Another commentator, Pariti, speaks of these men as those who have renounced the hankering after the senses. Maṇakkuṭavar's interpretation brings out the importance of this chapter in relation to the whole of Tirukkuṟaḷ. The perfect men, the sages and seers, are the embodiments of *Dharma* and expound that *Dharma* by every conduct of theirs. Here is a concrete ethical absolutism in which everything is sublimated.

An ethical aristocracy was known to the Caṅkam age but no group of those who had renounced, had here, to start with, the privilege of being the embodiment of

*Dharma*. The conception of *Vākai* has already been referred to. *Puṛanānūṟu* speaks of *Āy* as being no merchant of *Aṟam*. (*Puṛam* 134). He is great in *Aṟam* wherein *Dharma* is for the sake of *Dharma* which is the path of eternal righteousness in which had walked, generations of great men. He was not moved by any desire for a better life in the future through this *Dharma*; for that will be a trader's conception of *Dharma* investing something in the present to reap the greatest profit in the future. The term '*olukkattu nīttār*' may very well imply this conception. But a change has occurred in the *Caṅkam* society.

Thanks to the Buddhist and Jain influence on the *Caṅkam* age all the groups of missionaries in the cause of their *Dharma* come to occupy an important place in the society. Therefore the term *aṟam*, especially in the derived word *aṟavōr*, suffers a shift in meaning. *Āy* could not be called an *aṟavōṇ*. It is the *sanyāsins* who have got a *Dharmic* mission that come to be labelled as '*aṟavōr*.' *Tiruvalluvar* himself speaks of '*nīttār*' as '*aṟavōr*.' Fortunately the word *aṟam*', however, continues to refer to *Dharma* in general not restricted to renunciation alone. It is true in '*aṟam pūṇṭār*'—those who have undertaken the duty of *Dharma*—*Tiruvalluvar* refers to the people who had renounced. But that is because of the context marked by the word '*pūṇṭār*'. These are the people who have got a sacred mission and who have accepted that mission as their religious duty.

The words used here as referring to '*nīttār*' may be noted. These are: '*tuṟantār*' 'those who have renounced', '*aṟam pūṇṭār*' 'those who have accepted the mission of *Dharma*'; '*aṟavōr*' means the same thing; '*ceyaṟku*

*ariya ceyvār* 'those who have achieved what is difficult for others; *Periyār* 'the great,' '*Kuṇam ennum kuṇru ēriṇiṇrār*' 'those who have reached the pinnacle of perfection'; '*niṇaimoli māntar*' 'the people of the words of never falling significance', 'words which are real *mantras*.'

There are three more descriptions which really explain the meaning of '*nīttār*'. "The great have the real knowledge or wisdom; this is the goad which controls the five elephants of senses." This idea is not new, but very significant. Here it is not a life of world-negation. The *aṇavōr* are not the slaves but the masters of the sense organs, because they know that these five sensations with all their multitudinous forms and temptations ultimately depend on the man who experiences them. The world is experienced and known through the sense organs. If that experience is pure and true, the right philosophy and the right *Dharma* are known and followed, '*cuvai oḷi ūru ōcai nāṇṇam enṇa aintiṇ vakai terivāṇ*' — "he who knows the various aspects or truths of the Five viz., Taste, Light, Touch, Sound and Smell (which make up the experience of this world to start with)." A slave to the passions can never have that experience and knowledge which are not easily achieved by others. In the Great, the hankering after the senses is completely extinguished '*aintavittāṇ*'; here it is not the death of the sense organs but the complete control and mastery over the dangerous instruments of knowledge and life that is denoted; the poisonous fangs of the five headed cobra of sensations have been removed and in that way these Greatmen have sublimated them in the service of *Dharma*. The great man is therefore, *uraṇ ennum tōṭṭiyāṇ ōraintum kāppāṇ*. "he who controls (the

elephants of sensations) with his goad of the real strength (viz., right knowledge or experience)". These passions are also sublimated and what may appear to an outsider, as an outburst of anger on the part of the Great is really a righteous indignation. There is not however any evil intention, lurking in his mind. This exhibition of righteous indignation is momentary though volcanic in its effect. Since, as will be seen later, *Dharma* is inspired by love, even when there is that outburst, the great man continues to be an embodiment, of universal love, whose mission in life is to help all to attain the perfection through this universal love.

“ antaṇar enpōr aṇavōr maṇṇu evvuyirkkum  
centaṇmal pūṇṭu oḷukalān ”

[30]

“ *Antaṇar* (i. e. those of cool and beautiful nature i. e. the people of kindness) are really the *aṇavōr* (the people of *Dharma*); for it is they who live according to their ideal of being upright and kind (cool) to every living being.” This final conception of the great men clearly emphasises their importance in any description of *Dharma* which is their universal mission.

The fourth chapter of this Introduction emphasises *Dharma*. This gives a key, as it were to unlock the treasures of *Tirukkuṇāḷ*. Though *Tirukkuṇāḷ* speaks of *Artha*, *Dharma* and *Kāma*, all these three are really the three different aspects of one universal *Dharma*. This is a conception which has already been referred to. ‘*Artha* and *Kāma* follow the lead of *Dharma*’ sings *Puṇanānūru*. But *Tiruvalluvar* will make *Dharma* the real moving spirit whose outward manifestations will be the three-fold *Dharma*, yielding the glory including *mōkṣa*. It yields all kinds of wealth and happiness—all that come through *Dharma*.

There is nothing higher than *Dharma*. There is no fall greater than forgetting it. *Dharma* alone is what has to be performed, escaping from condemnation; one has to perform *Dharma* in all possible ways, without any break and without procrastination. Tirukkural believes in the life after death and also believes that one should escape the cycle of births. *Dharma* helps one in all these ways.

The phrase '*ollum vakaiyāṇ*' "in ways which are possible for you" is significant. A poor man can be kind to others without becoming a millionaire; kind thoughts, kind words and kind acts are not the privilege of the few. This brings out Tolkāppiyar's conception of *Vākai*. Valluvar further emphasises the mental purity which alone is important as the real inspiration, even when one's words are not learned and even when one's acts are not theatrical. It is the hankering after pleasures of a selfish life that is called '*avā*'. It is this which is '*mācu*' or the impurity of mind; whilst purity consists in its absence or as it will be seen later in sublimating it into universal love '*tūymai enpatu avā-v-iṇmai*', "purity is the absence of *avā* (selfish love)." Therefore all *Dharma* ultimately consists in becoming mentally purified and perfected. In the absence of this pure mind the so called righteous conduct becomes nothing more than a show. Therefore there should be no hankering after anything. When there is no hankering there is no anger, when such hankering is not fulfilled. There is no competition in this life of universal co-operation and therefore there is no jealousy or envy or any feeling of superiority in any walk of life. The acts therefore which never inspire *Dharma* are those of jealousy, desire or anger.

The perfect equanimity of the mind is revealed by one's speech which avoids all bitterness and unkindness. Therefore *Dharma* is that which knows no envy, no hankering, no anger and no bitter words.

In this Introduction we have a glimpse of the working of the mind of Tiruvalluvar. To him *Dharma* is omnipresent. It is the perfection of the man-material, intellectual, domestic, spiritual and moral. He believes in the perfect men who are the embodiments of this *Dharma*, the standing examples for the world to follow. He also believes in Nature's help in the path of righteousness. He believes in God, the inner inspiration of the Universal *Dharma*.

It is from this point of view that we have to understand his Tirukkural. But in his descriptions of the three-fold goal of life Valluvar does not want to force others to accept his fundamental beliefs. He therefore, chooses to discuss the three-fold goal without clubbing them together under the title of *Dharma*. He also does not want to emphasise any missionary life for all. He also may be presumed to lay down his ideas of the three-fold goal of life without reference to God or Nature. This is not to say that he relinquishes these fundamental ideas. Though he is certain indeed that this belief should be the inspiration, he is tolerant enough to appreciate other points of view and to lay down the scheme of life as acceptable to all. His inner inspiration cannot be hidden completely; but he explains it in a way suitable for others. Even in the Introduction he has really attempted to follow the path of least resistance; but still others may not give these ideas the fundamental position which he will give them in his scheme of things.

According to Tiruvaḷḷuva Mālai, the last subdivision of this *Aṟattu-p-pāl* is the chapter on 'Ūḷ'. According to this verse, this does not form part of the chapters on *illaṟam* and *tuṟavaṟam*. The same idea is also repeated in a verse quoted by Kāḷiṅkar at the end of his commentary on the chapter on 'Ūḷ'; 'Ūḷ' is something ripe for enjoyment; it is an order something like cause and effect. Parimēlaḷakar calls it '*niyati*' or uniformity of nature in the universe which includes the mental, moral, spiritual as well as material universe. Tiruvaḷḷuvar also uses the word '*pāl*' that is what is one's innate nature or innate endowment or what is one's own natural share in the universe. There is a phrase occurring in Kuṟaḷ '*vakuttāṇ vakutta vakai*' which according to Kāḷiṅkar means that which has been achieved by one as one's share of nature. In that sense one is the architect of one's own fate, not only in this birth but in the previous births. Parimēlaḷakar, however, will interpret the term '*vakuttāṇ*' not as the person to determine the enjoyment of his own share of fate but the ordainer or Lord of fate. Tiruvaḷḷuvar also refers to '*ulakattu iyaṟkai*', 'the nature of the world,' perhaps referring to determinism. He also speaks of '*uṇmai aṟivu*' as contrasted with '*nūl aṟivu*.' *Uṇmai aṟivu* is one's own innate knowledge, something which characterises one from one's birth. Parimēlaḷakar interprets '*uṇmai*' as fate. Tiruvaḷḷuvar speaks of *ākūḷ*, good fortune and *pōkūḷ* and *ilavūḷ*, misfortune. There is also the word '*teyvam*', used elsewhere for this 'ūḷ' in Tirukkuṟaḷ (619).

Apart from the chain of cause and effect in the material world, Tirukkuṟaḷ probably assumes the

existence of such a chain in the moral and mental world as well. This is why the transmigration theory is upheld. What may not be clearly explicable from what happens in this birth has to be explained in terms of the happenings in other births. The mysteries of this universe such as the inexplicable failures of what to us seem to be a successful attempt, the unforeseen success of attempts which we feel should end in failure, the mysterious ignorance of the wise and the learned, the consequent divorce of knowledge from success or wealth, the sufferings in the midst of wealth, the evil resulting from good, the good resulting from evil, the futility at times of all good efforts, and the inescapability from the allotted share, resist all reasonable explanations in the absence of the theory of *Karma*.

Tiruvalluvar speaks of ‘*iruvinaṭai*’ or two kinds of *Karmas* and also the cycle of births from which one has to escape. There is one thing in this mystery which appeals to him and which he often refers to. The beggar and the man who has renounced, for all outward purposes, are equal; both can boast of no worldly possessions. But the beggar is miserable and tries to escape from his poverty. But the man who has renounced is happy at his independence and freedom from the worldly fetters; and then the very same poverty is his glory. But this is possible only for the chosen few and that is why they are a few, while others who do not welcome the sufferings of *tapas* are many. That is the very reason why the beggars are in greater number. ‘*ilar palar ākiya kāraṇam nōṭpār cilar palar nōlātavar* (270)—“those who bear the sufferings as a path

to perfection are only a few; others are many. That is the reason why the poor are many"—is interpreted here in this way, though Parimēlalakar will give a different interpretation. "Why are not those beggars like the people of the renounced. They are not blessed with inner vision and mental contentment." That is the cause of their *Karma*. Otherwise these beggars would have welcomed renunciation. Here is therefore the way out of this unending chain of causation. It is not a struggling against fate, a mere fretting and fuming. One has to welcome the mysterious effects as natural according to the theory of *Karma*. It is not misery alone that is inexplicable, though that alone makes us murmur and revolt. Even the good things of the world and the happiness we enjoy are equally inexplicable. "If you are overjoyed with fortune, why bewail this misfortune. Keep the equanimity of the mind and accept the happenings as the very Nature of this world. The scientist who tries to escape the workings of the law of gravitation understands the law of Nature and escapes from it only by following that law. Appreciating the limitations of that law alone helps him to escape from that law. As has been often pointed out, there is determinism in a game of cards where the players have no control over the distribution of cards. Still whatever cards the players get, they play the game according to the pre-established rule and win the game, thanks to their ingenuity. In this sense, determinism is not against the freedom of our spiritual life. *Karma* is all-powerful. But its limitations are well realised by

a wise man and then, even the *Karma* is utilised on the way to salvation, without any opposition or frustration, in the same way in which the scientist uses the uniformity of Nature for his scientific advancement.

All this is not explicitly stated by Tiruvalluvar. But the explanations given here are not distortions of Tiruvalluvar's views. In any case the importance of this chapter standing alone very much like the introductory chapters, should be realised. Perhaps the author feels that though he himself will place the theory of *Karma* as something central in the scheme of things he is not prepared to force it on unbelieving minds so as to make it central, even in the explanations of the three-fold goal of life given in the other chapter of his work. This *ūl* applies not only to the achievements of *Dharma* but also to those of *Artha* and *Kāma*. This has been emphasised by Parimēlaḷakar and Maṇakkuṭavar. One more thing may be stated. This *Aṟattuppāl* starts with the emphasis on God and ends with the emphasis on *Karma*. Perhaps there is no contradiction. *Ūl* and *iruvinaḷ* oppress those who have not the correct perspective as already stated; but those who walk in the path of righteousness towards God are not fettered by this *Karma*; for theirs is the mental equanimity to which the *Kuṟaḷ* refers to.

“*nanṟu āṅkāḷ nallavā-k-kāṇpavar anṟu āṅkāḷ  
allal paṭuvatu evaṇ*”

[379]

“Why should those who see only good and happiness in everything when fortune smiles on them, suffer and feel miserable when misfortune undertakes them?”

## 2.1.4

One may now try to consider the conception of *Dharma* as one of the three goals of life. Tiruvalluvar according to Tiruvalluva Mālai treats of domestic life in twenty chapters and of the life of renunciation in thirteen chapters. Both these kinds of life, form together what is known as *Dharma*. Are these two aspects of *Dharma* really two different ways of life which have nothing in common? Bergson has made us familiar with the idea of looking at these two aspects as representing two different varieties of Morals. One is the morality of the ordinary man with his limited fields of love and activity, and the other is the morality of those who are, from their birth, worldmen, whose love extends to the whole world and universe, like Christ, Rāmakriṣṇa, Rāmaliṅga, Buddha and Saṅkara. From this point of view both are natural to the people practising those two kinds of moralities. There is nothing negative in '*tuṟavaṟam*.' It is no running away from life. '*Tuṟavaṟam*' therefore represents a higher perfection and a more comprehensive love. Probably because of this interpretation, the great German philosopher Schweitzer does not see any negativism or world-negation in Tiruvalluvar, in spite of the latter writing on '*tuṟavaṟam*.'

But there is one difficulty in the way. The '*tuṟavaṟam*' Tiruvalluvar treats of, does certainly lead to the universalism and perfection of, the world man. However, when one reads Tirukkuṟaḷ, one could not assert that the *tuṟavaṟam* which he contemplates is the *Tuṟavaṟam* of the native born world man. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that Tiruvalluvar is speaking of those who are not

born with this universal love but who have to become perfected in that way. Here again one sees that Valluvar is not developing a world-negation. He is not describing a life which is out of the ordinary. He emphasises those points in one's life which have to be developed to perfection. *Tuṛavaṛam* is a natural development for all.

It may be admitted that there are two kinds of morality. But the second kind of morality of universal love is not something reserved only for those, who are by nature followers of that morality. It cannot be denied that there are such born saints; but others also can reach that stage by achieving that perfection during their life. From this point of view the two moralities become one; but represent two stages of the gradual development of human perfection, though the perfection may be inborn in a few great men of the world. Interpreted this way, *tuṛavaṛam* ceases to be world-negation. It is a perfection reached in the natural way, and therefore *illaṛaviyal* and *tuṛavaṛaviyal* should be taken together.

### 2.1.41

One may be tempted to question this interpretation which may look like introducing our own ideas into Tirukkuṛaḷ. It is here that the Pan-Indian conception will be a help in proving that this interpretation represents only the well-known ideal. The four-fold *āṣrama* life has not been followed in full in Tamil land. But the four-fold life is a natural development towards universalism and perfection. There is the life of a *Brahmachāri*—the unmarried student receiving education. Next is the stage reached by the *Brahmachāri*

when he marries and leads a family life with all its social responsibilities. The third is the stage of *Vānaprasta*, where the husband and wife retire to forest seeking perfection. The next spiritual development in this path is that of the *Sanyāsin*, the man of the universe. Kālidāsa describes this ideal of gradual four-fold development as governing the lives of all the perfect kings whose history he narrates with epic grandeur in his *Raghuvamsa*. Kampan refers to this concept when *Dasaratha* wants to retire to the forest after crowning *Rama*.

Therefore our interpretation is nothing new. But in the Tamil country the four-fold life was looked upon as a two-fold life, of the family man and of the man of the universe, spoken of in terms of *illaṟam* and *tuṟavaṟam*. *Brahmachāri* or the student, after all, belongs to the family. The refusal to divide the non-domestic life into two as *Vānaprasta* and *Sanyāsa* is significant in the Tamilian thought. *Vānaprasta* and *Sanyāsa* are clubbed together as *tuṟavaṟam*. The emphasis here therefore cannot be laid on living away from one's wife in *tuṟavaṟam*. The couple, no longer co-operating for the greatness of the family, now co-operate for the perfection of their universal love. Therefore 'tuṟavu' is not renouncing the world. One cannot get away from the world or action. What is important is the change in the attitude towards life. That there is no longer an emphasis on the reality of "my family and other families", "my country and other countries." Therefore Tiruvalluvar emphasises the liquidation of the pride and ignorance involved in one's using the terms, the 'I' and the 'Mine' - "*yān enatu ennum cerukku aṟuppān*" [346] "he who cuts himself away from (the fettering

bondage of) the pride (egotism) which indulges in speaking of the 'I' and the 'Mine.' The final perfection of universal love is denoted from a practical point of view, as the riddance of all hankerings and consequent attachments. The last chapter in *tuṛavaṛa-v-iyal* is *avā-v-aṛuttal*. The hankering after pleasures and the consequent attachments should be sublimated into the universal love. It is this which is emphasised in the chapter on *tuṛavu*. Nowhere in '*tuṛavaṛaviyal*' is any special demand made that one should renounce his wife.

### 2.1.42

'*Tuṛavaṛam*' should be therefore explained in terms of its positive aspects, though for making its definition clearer, the contrast with '*illaṛam*' has to be emphasised in terms of negative phrases. It must not be assumed, however, that '*illaṛam*' is the direct opposite of '*tuṛavaṛam*'. Certain aspects of life are tolerated in *illaṛam*, which should not be tolerated when human perfection and universal love are to be achieved. It is from this point of view that one has to interpret the headings in '*tuṛavaṛaviyal*' like '*pulāl maṛuttal*' 'refusing non-vegetarian food,' '*kūṭāvolukkam*' 'getting rid of any conduct which does not agree with '*tuṛavaṛam*', '*kallāmai*' 'getting rid of any idea of stealth or fraud', '*cinnavāmai*' 'absence of anger', '*innāceyyāmai*' 'refraining, from doing any harm or from inflicting sufferings on others', '*kollāmai*' 'non-killing of any living organism,' '*nilaiyāmai*' 'knowledge of impermanence of life', '*tuṛavu*,' 'renunciation' '*paṛṛaṛuttal*' 'cutting away the fetters of attachment.' *Tavam* or *tapas* may also be looked upon as a negative act from this point of view. Though the forms of the phrases are negative, what is intended is the positive aspect of the mental equanimity

and love which are denoted by these negative phrases. Therefore *tuṣavaṣam* implies a positive state of mind and a life which one can infer from the absence of the acts described.

There are three important headings in '*tuṣavaṣaviyal*' which are expressed in positive terms '*aruḷuṭaimai*' 'compassion or universal love', '*meyyunarvu*' 'true knowledge' and '*vāymai*' 'truth'. '*Aruḷuṭaimai*' or being blessed with universal compassion is the beginning of '*tuṣavaṣam*'. It is the real inspiration which governs life and ultimately blossoms into human perfection. It is from this point of view of universal love that one refuses non-vegetarian food. The other virtues expressed in terms of negative phrases are inspired by this '*aruḷ*'.

It is curious that '*kaḷḷāmai*' should be included in '*tuṣavaṣaviyal*' instead of in '*illaṣaviyal*'. Pariti translates it as '*kaṭaṭa puttiyai viṭutal*' that is, renouncing the fraudulent designs. Here is included the intellectual fraud. One ought not to pretend that because of universal outlook he can look upon other's property as his. '*tuṣavaṣam*' therefore recognises the proprietary rights whether they be communal or individual. The mind involved in such fraudulent designs is inimical to the life of *aruḷ*. Even by negligence, such evil thoughts should not occur while inspired by *aruḷ* where one aims at being kind to all. Such negligence represents the absence of right knowledge and the absence of *aruḷ*. It is instigated only by real ignorance or benighted intelligence. This chapter on '*kaḷḷāmai*' may probably suggest that '*tuṣavaṣam*' which must include *Vānaprastha* contemplates certain minimum possessions. Even a *sanyāsin* has to be clothed and fed. *Kaḷḷāmai* 'getting rid of any idea of stealth or fraud' is the state

of the mind. *Kūṭāvoḷukkam* “ getting rid of any conduct which does not agree with *tuṟavaṟam* ,” represents the outward behaviours. Fraudulent mind begets fraudulent behaviour which in a saint is a sin against society. To avoid the fraudulent behaviour one should cultivate the mind which indulges in no fraud — *Kaḷḷāmai*. But avoidance of the outward manifestation will lead to the ultimate perfection of the mind. That is why *kaḷḷāmai* follows the chapter on *Kūṭāvoḷukkam*.

*Innā ceyyāmai* ‘refraining from doing any harm or from inflicting sufferings on others and *kollāmai* ‘non-killing of any living organism’ are also important. Even under trying circumstances refusing to kill any living organism is possible only to those who have developed this spiritual perfection of universal love when, according to folklore, even the wild beings become the embodiments of love towards such a saint. In all these places Tiruvaḷḷuvar wants us to place ourselves in the position of the living being who has to receive the sufferings.

For making this kind of a life of universal love possible, one practises *tapas*. *Tapas* is not mental and physical mortification. One has to put up with the sufferings inflicted by others if one is successful in leading a life of universal love. The words ‘*nōṇṇal*’ and ‘*nōṇpu*’ mean consciously putting up with any painful act almost welcoming it as a penance or as a spiritual practice or undertaking. Parimēlaḷakar interprets it to mean fasts; but in the path of Universal love what is required is to put up with any suffering

caused by others. It is this practice that is emphasised by Kālīṅkar and Maṇakkuṭavar. But Paritīyār, true to the spirit of Valluvar, interprets it in a wider sense. It is not a question of putting up with the sufferings inflicted, but a positive act of sympathy and love towards others who suffer and therefore it is sharing their sufferings and taking upon one's shoulders the burden of relieving such sufferings. It may also mean a pity and a sympathy even for those who have inflicted the suffering on one who is full of pity. The next aspect of this practice is refusing to do any harm to any living being even when the latter inflicts a suffering or endangers one's life. These two aspects are really the two sides of one and the same coin of *tapas*. *Tapas* therefore is the attempted perfection through such experiments. Suffering thus welcomed by a loving heart makes the spirit glorious. What is aimed at by the loving heart is thus achieved through *tapas*. Such a man alone becomes perfect. Even from a selfish point of view, this is great because such a man alone attains mastery over himself. He alone discharges his duties. He works for himself in the best sense of the term whilst others become slaves of their own hankerings and waste their life, doing nothing for their own real good.

The chapter on ' *kūṭāvoḷukkam* ' ' getting rid of any conduct which does not agree with *tuṟavaṟam* ' will suggest that even in the age of Tiruvalluvar there were people who traded upon the credulity of the masses who always value the life of a *sanyāsin*.

The right kind of knowledge or wisdom is emphasised in ' *meyyuṇartal* . ' One should not mistake

unreal things for real. Whatever be the thing and whatever be its outward nature, true wisdom lies in realising its real truth. One must not be a doubting Thomas. One must achieve the clear vision leading to certainty and spiritual action. Our sense organs are the windows of knowledge. But in the absence of true wisdom and true vision, even the correct scientific phenomenal knowledge will not yield any useful harmony of the conflicting bits of knowledge. Involvement in the cycle of births is really ignorance. When one escapes from this, the glorious truth dawns and one's own true Being is realised where there is no lust, anger or delusion. This is where one has to take refuge, getting rid of the false attachments one is accustomed to. In short, the true wisdom or perception of the inner Truth dawns only when attachment ceases and the true universal love blossoms. We have already seen the force of the words *tūymai* and *vāymai*.

“ *tūuymai enpatu avā-v-inmai maṛratu  
vāaymai vēṇṭa varum*”

[364]

“Purity is the absence of selfish desires. That purity comes when one aspires for Truth.”

### 2.1.5

A deeper insight which leads to a perception of the truth behind everything seen and experienced has been described as true wisdom which alone is capable of removing the fetters of attachment and of leading one to the stage of perfection beyond the sea of births. The importance of the term ‘*mey*’ or truth in ‘*mey-y-uṇartal*’ and the resulting freedom from attachments should be emphasised, as is made clear by the Kuṛaḷ:—

“ tūuymai enpatu avā-v-inmai maṛṛatu  
vāaymai vēṇṭa varum. ”

[364]

‘ *Vāymai* ’ is another name for truth but it emphasises the truth which shines through our speech. Truth is not terminal exactitude but the manifestation of the inner *aruḷ* in speech. Therefore truth is speaking that which is not harmful; and Kuṛaḷ goes even to that extent of saying that even falsehood has the nature of truth if the perfect good which results therefrom is free from any fault whatsoever. Therefore it is the inner inspiration and the ultimate good which results—viz., the purity of both the means and the ends—that is important. The inspiration must be pure; otherwise our own conscience will scold us if we go against the grain of our heart by uttering a falsehood. “ Be true to your conscience otherwise your very heart burns you. ” “ One who follows this conduct certainly dwells in the minds of all. ” We have realised the truth of this statement in the life of Mahatma Gandhi.

There are two great virtues, one is *Ahimsa*; the other is Truth.

“ onṛāka nallatu kollāmai maṛṛatan  
piṇcāra-p-poyyāmai naṇṛu ”

[323]

“ The greatest virtue is non-killing ; coming next to it is non-falsehood ”

This is the accepted view. But Tiruvalluvar will give the place of prominence to truth. There is nothing

more truthful than truth and if one follows the path of truth without fail, according to Tiruvalluvar one need not do any other good. This is because others are manifestations of this inner inspiration.

This reminds us of the conception of *Satyāgraha* as held by Mahatma Gandhi. To him, Truth was God. Mahatma Gandhi has said “To see the all-pervading spirit of truth face to face, one must be able to love the meanest creation as oneself.” “To place oneself in another’s position is the golden rule” is the message of Judaism and Christianity; and this has been emphasised by Tiruvalluvar, [250, 318 etc.]. All the negative phrases used by Tiruvalluvar, as already pointed out, represent *Ahimsa*. It is not a negative doctrine but the real positive energy of love and truth. “What is universal love and what is its opposite”—thus asks Tiruvalluvar and he himself gives the reply. *Aruḷ* is *Ahimsa*, non-killing [not to kill]; *Himsa* or killing is the absence of *Aruḷ*.” In this way *Ahimsa* and *Aruḷ* are equated. The question may arise why the negative form ‘*kollāmai*’ is used especially when the negative form misleads us into thinking that *Ahimsa* is only negative doctrine. “All life and flesh”, says Mahatma Gandhi, “exists by some violence. Hence the highest religion has been defined by the negative word *Ahimsa*. The world is bound by the chain of destruction. In other words, violence is an inherent necessity for life in the body. That is why a votary of *Ahimsa* always prays for ultimate deliverance from the bondage of the flesh. *Ahimsa* from another point of view, is truth. *Ahimsa* or truth implies fearlessness.”

One who becomes a lord of universal love thus protects the living beings. There is nothing to be afraid of in his life. This truth and universal love pervade all aspects of life, and that has been explained in *tuṛavaṛa-v-iyal*. In Mahatma Gandhi we have a standing example of Tiruvalluvar's ideal man.

### 2.1.51

We may close our study of this aspect of our subject, by taking a look at modern thought. *Ahimsa* scrupulously practised by the Jains, the compassion, governing the acts of the Buddhist and the *satyāgraha*, the life principle of Mahatma Gandhi—these three explain much more than any commentary, the underlying principle of Kuṛaḷ. Dr. Schweitzer's conception of reverence for life is significant. *Matsya nyāya*, as the will to live at first seems to rule the world. But in this western saint of the modern world, this ghastly drama becomes a drama of love. The will to live, he realises, has come to know about other wills-to-live. "There is unity" he says, "a longing to arrive at unity with itself to become universal." The phrase "reverence for life" flashed forth as a revelation and at once the riddle of the universe was solved for him in terms of universal love. Thus dawned on him *meyyuṇarvu*, the great truth about the ethical world and life-affirmation together with all ideals of civilisations.

All life is suffering and this is the great truth of Tolkāppiyar's *Kāñci*. At the realisation of a reverence for life, one is seized with love which is really the deep pity for all creatures, not only for Man. The right word

for this pity here is *arul*. There alone the will to live escapes the ghastly Drama of *matsya nyāya* and proceeds to get purified on its way to universal love. Life to Schweitzer becomes sacred in the same way in which the Jains believe in it. As Mr. Elwin points out this great mass murderer of bacteria "goes out of the way to lift a parched earthworm from the dust and put it safely in the grass or stoop to rescue a struggling insect from a puddle; he will not tear leaves from a tree or pluck flowers in a garden." Schweitzer in fact has extended the principle of reverence for life beyond the realm of animal, bird, fish and insect to the humblest forms of the vegetable creation and even to forms of inanimate beauty. This reminds us of *Kavunti Aṭikaḷ*'s speech in *Cilappatikāram*, but in Schweitzer the dry bone becomes a divine incarnation. To Schweitzer this reverence for life is fellowship in joy and in effort; it includes feeling as one's own—all the concentration and all the aspirations of the will to live—its pleasures too and its language; to live itself out to the full, as well as its urge to self perfection. One gives out oneself for the other life. Therefore, there, one reveres all life as his own life. Goodness consists therefore in saving or helping of life, the enabling of whatever life one can influence to attain its highest development. Dostoevsky knew this reverence for life and the truth of *arul*. "Love all God's creation the whole and every grain of sand in it. If you love everything you will perceive the divine mystery in things. Once you perceive it, you will begin to comprehend it better every day and you will come at last to live the whole world with an all embracing love."

Here comes to our mind Mahatma Gandhi's identification of himself with the poor and the down-trodden.

‘Call me not a Mahatma’, he cries, ‘I am a *bhangi*, a sweeper and an out-caste’ and he preferred living with them. His heart bleeds for the sufferings of the world. We know how the communal disturbances deeply affected him and how he preferred to bear the Cross for all. The fasts were his *tapas*; he himself had said :

“My penance is the prayer of a bleeding heart for forgiving the sins unwittingly committed.” This is the secret of his taking all responsibility for the so-called Himalayan blunders. Here we see what the Christian missionaries call ‘the wound of compassion’. The chapter on *tapas* in Kuraḷ should be read from this point of view. There is a bliss in this suffering, an expansion of our personality to the limit of universalism. This mystery of the mystic joy of the Cross is what explains the enchantments of Tragedy in literature where we undergo the same *tapas*. This does not depend on the belief in *ātman* or God. Even an *anātmic* Buddhism experiences this. Here is what the Buddhist *Santadeva* writes, “A man should diligently foster the thought that his fellow creatures are the same as himself. All have the same sorrows, the same joy as I; and I must guard them like myself. The body manifold of parts in its division of members must be preserved as a whole; and so like-wise this manifold universe has its sorrow and joy in common. I must destroy the pain of another as though it were my own because it is a pain; I must show kindness to others, for they are creatures as I am myself.”

## 2.2. ARATTUPPĀL

### 2.2.1 *Illāṟam* :

#### 2.2.1.1

One may now pass on to consider ‘*illāṟaviyal*’ as a stage leading on to the perfection of the universal love

contemplated in 'tuṛavaṛaviyaḷ'. There are here twenty chapters. The first chapter deals with domestic life and describes the importance of this life in the society as it is constituted of students and *sanyāsins*, of the orphans and destitutes and of the poor and out - caste, of gods and new - comers. There is also the duty of preserving the memory of the past generation and the care of the kinsmen. There is a beautiful phrase in Tiruvaḷḷuvar 'pāttūṇ', 'sharing one's food with others'—which is the greatness of domestic life. "If domestic life could be led according to *Dharma* what more does one gain by following other orders of life? *Dharma* is really domestic life." Vaḷḷuvar describes the inner inspiration and the nature of domestic life and the good effects flowing from it. Love and *Dharma* should characterise this life. Those precious possessions are its very nature in one sense; and its crown and glory in another sense. It is clear that domestic life can become the ideal life because it escapes the dangers inherent in other orders of life. It must however be inspired by love and blossom into *Dharma*. The word used for love is *aṇpu* as contrasted with *aruḷ* which characterises *tuṛavaṛam*. If *aruḷ* is universal love, *aṇpu* is the overflowing of kindness to those who are dear and near to oneself. It is true there is a certain amount of self-interest to start with. The Greeks have tried to measure the differing grades of love as it were, by measuring the self-interest covering it. At the lowest point is the self-regarding love. Over and above that is the love which is completely delightful. At the top-most point, shines love which has no thought of the self but has always the interest of the delight of others. absolutely for the sake of others.

## 2.2. 1.2

Even at the very first step in real love which the married couple feel towards each other, love reflects this highest point. “Those who have no love amass everything for themselves. Those who are blessed with real love give away even the bones of their bodies completely for the sake of others alone.” This reminds us of the highest point of Greek love. The very body exists for the expression of love which is the very basis of the glory achieved by the happy couple. Love is the very basis of life : “ *an pin valiyatu uyir nilai* ” ; in its absence we see only a corpse strutting across the stage. There is another meaning given to this phrase ‘*An pin valiyatu*’ — ‘Love is a life-giving, life-sustaining power.’ As emphasised by Sorokin, “other conditions being equal, altruistic persons live longer than egoistic individuals. The combination of a person of too little love with too much hate, is largely responsible for many cardiovascular, respiratory gastro-intestinal, endocrinological geneto-urinary and skin diseases plus some forms of epilepsy and headache.” This is not something new to India. The Buddhist *Dharma cakra* represents love which is the eternal harmony expressing the great truth that all who love are healers of those who are in need of it.

## 2.2. 1.3

But this love is still not the universal Love. It has to be transformed into that universal power, knowledge and truth of love. Before Tiruvalluvar comes to describe this love, blossoming in the beautiful garden of family life, he describes the directions in which this love turns,

when the married couple come together and achieve a communion of their souls in their common life of love and service. An old Caṅkam poet describes it in the speech of the lovers ‘*irutalai-p-pullin ōruyirammē*’, “we with two bodies have one soul like that of the fabulous bird with two heads.” The wife knows no other God, but her lover. The Kuṟaḷ, ‘*teyvam tolāaḷ kolunarṟolu-teluvāl peyyena-p-peyyum maḷai*’, “she does not worship any divine power ; she worships her husband ; if such a woman commands the rain, it will rain” reminds us of what Socrates speaks of in Plato’s Symposium : “They seek a love who is to be made like him whom they serve and when they have found it they themselves imitate their God and persuade their love to do the same and educate him into the manner and nature of God as far as they can, for no feelings of envy or jealousy are entertained by them towards their beloved ; but they do their utmost to create in him the greatest likeness of themselves and the God whom they honour.” In this way the lover is there transformed into the ideal God though this love, coloured to start with what may seem to be lust, is attached to the body. But it soon becomes free from lust, and sooner or later the loving soul sees the entire Truth and becomes the universal love. Woman is not expressive but she has the potentialities of divinity. “She protects herself and protects the fair name and glory of their joint life—not only her own glory but the glory of her own husband. She never fails in tending her husband with loving care. She can win great glory in the world of gods.”

#### 2.2.1.4

But this love must be expanding in ever-widening circles. This universalisation is made possible at the

next step by their children, who form the crown and glory of a family which is blessed with the greatness of a wife. Here also love first expresses itself in the innocent pleasures of bodily contact. The very touch of the children turns ordinary food into sweet ambrosia. We experience momentarily at least the eternal embrace of universal love of which Mahatma Gandhi speaks in its fully ripened form, as visualised by him. "Having flung aside the sword, there is nothing except the cup of love which I can offer to those who oppose me. It is by offering that cup that I expect to draw them close to me. I cannot think of permanent enmity between man and man; and believing as I do in the theory of rebirth I live in the hope that if not in this birth in some other birth I shall be able *to hug all humanity in friendly embrace.*" It is this ideal hugging which we experience though for a moment when the innocent child embraces us. The children's touch is the body's greatest delight. Their lisp is the greatest delight to our ears. Only those who have not heard the music of this lisping praise the music of the lute and the flute. In describing the bliss which results from our love towards children, Tiruvalluvar must be having in his mind what Mahatma Gandhi has been saying about hugging the universe. There is no selfishness, at least conscious selfishness, in this bliss on either side. This experience should become universal. For the children, the importance of family cannot be exaggerated. In the absence of a family and motherly love, they succumb to wasting diseases and become selfish pleasure-hunters. Our nursery is really the nursery of love. In this nursery, as described by Valluvar, there

is no selfish interest because everything guides us on to the path of universal love. The parents are happy that their children are greater than themselves, that they are recognised as perfect beings by the world at large.

### 2.2.1 5

It is after having described the blossoming of love in the concrete situation of a loving wife and a husband, enjoying the greatness of their children when the latter prove useful to the society at large, that Vaḷḷuvar describes the love still further widening and overflowing to those who come as guests. The pleasures and the greatness of the sharing of the food with unexpected guests are then described. Tiruvaḷḷuvar describes it as a *vēlvi* or a great sacrifice. It must be a loving reception, otherwise there is no expansion of love. The new-comer should not sense any gloom of inconvenience, darkening the brows of the host. Paritīyār emphasises that this loving duty should be performed as a communion by both the husband and the wife.

### 2.2.1.6

Inner love should become manifest in sweet words and righteous action. Then only the service of love converts them to the creed of love. As Augustine has shown us 'love never faileth.' The sweet words therefore announce to others the coming in of the spring of love. The words are sweet; they are full of love; there is no deceit whatsoever. It shows that these words are inspired by a glimpse of the universal truth. Tiruvaḷḷuvar thus reminds us that at every stage on this

path of universal love, the final vision comes as a distant glimpse even when one starts on this arduous journey to the land of universal love. Again and again Valluvar emphasises the inner inspiration and the inner purity. When the heart is full, how can there be any misery or poverty. In such a man, the words themselves shine like ornaments of glory and in this way one makes great progress on the path of virtue. “Why does a man indulge in harsh words when one experiences the infectious bliss inspired by sweet words? It is like clutching at the unripe fruits when the sweet ripe fruits are available in plenty”.

## 2.2 1.7

In this kind of life in society one meets with rebuffs from unexpected quarters. One has however not to lose his patience. He must still follow the path of love. The duty of gratitude is emphasised in such a way as to strengthen the hold of love on us. No man is wholly evil or wholly good. Therefore in this path of love one has to remember always the good things of the world. We must train ourselves to praise and appreciate whatever help others offer us, at the proper time and at the proper place, without expecting any return. The greatness of an action lies in the loving response kindled in the heart of the righteous men. Therefore to slight any help received bespeaks the smallness of our mind. Trained thus in glorifying the helping hand of others, we always think of the good turns. We never desert the good aspects. After this kind of training, it is easy to concentrate on the good things done and to forget any injury received. “The deadliest deed is straight

forgotten by the grateful memory of a single benefit received." The idea which occurs in folk-lore and in Caṅkam age comes as the final conclusion; 'He who has killed every virtue may yet escape. There is no escape for him who has killed a benefit'.

## 2.2.1.8

But this does not mean that when one's legal judgement is called upon to be pronounced, one should be partial to anyone who has helped us. Tiruvalluvar speaks of '*naṭuvu nilaimai*', that is, being upright without any sign of partiality. He calls it *takuti* or 'propriety'; *ceppam*, 'the sense of justice'. It recognises no stranger or friend or enemy and welcomes any adversity which may flow therefrom. Here again Valluvar emphasises the inner purity. The mind must be upright; then only the words can be judged just. The golden rule, 'do as will be done by' is suggested here also to the trader, who is in need of good trade; he takes good care of other's goods as he does his own.

## 2.2.1.9

Here come in, humility and self-control. As Mahatma Gandhi puts it, "love is the strongest force the world possesses and yet it is the humblest imaginable." The absence of humility and self-control is vanity and pride. They are not inspired by love. They lead, therefore, to the unrighteous path of selfishness and ignorance. The verses which praise the beauty and humility remind us of Gandhi. Humility is the greatest wealth. It is the glory praised by the wise. To all alike, humility is great; but to the wealthy amongst

them, it is indeed a great treasure. Love thus leads to humility and as Gandhi says, "we must act even as the mango tree which droops at its load of fruits. Its grandeur lies in its majestic loneliness." Tiruvalluvar speaks of its power and grandeur. "The man of humility is greater and grander than the mountain. The humility and self-control of the five sense organs practised in one single birth is powerful all through seven births." Dostoevsky who has seen the hidden depths of the evil in man finds only one escape therefrom and that is humility; and therefore he praises humility even as Valluvar does. But this humility must be a loving humility. "Loving humility" he states "is the most effective force, the most terrific, the most powerful unequalled by any other force in the world." Valluvar also speaks of the control of the tongue. "Even one word causing pain destroys all virtues. The blister caused by fire will heal from inside; but not the brand of a bitter tongue."

### 2.2.1.10

Thus the loving man with all sweetness, propriety, justice and humility becomes one with the ideals of his society. Good conduct and the demeanour or propriety as expected by that society, become his second nature. Those who cannot move in harmony with the world are learned idlots. Good conduct is our best guide in this life. It makes for excellence. It is the mainspring of all *Dharma*. The nobility of birth is symbolised by good demeanour. Therefore it has to be protected more than our life; for dire consequences follow from any deviation therefrom. The greatness of this propriety is that it is inspired by the social consciousness which is the result of the development of the fundamental principle of love.

## 2.2.1.11

Love is different from lust. Lust is vulgar and demeaning. As already stated love inspires the lover to behave towards the beloved after the manner of God. Love is therefore spiritual but lust is carnal. If love sees the sparks of divinity in the beloved, it cannot cast any lustful glance at others' wives. It is an insult to one's own ideal, to one's own life, to one's own wife, to one's own society. It is an insult to womanhood and to creation in which woman stands there as a saviour. The sense of revolt which Tiruvalluvar feels against this folly of lusting another's wife is beautifully reflected in Kampan's great epic. The greatest and the most unpardonable sin which *Rāvaṇa* and *Vāli* committed is this lust for another's woman. It is because of this, that whilst the widow of *Vāli* becomes the lady-love of *Sugrīva* in *Vālmīki* she is painted as a chaste widow by Kampan; for otherwise Kampan in his scheme of poetry, cannot justify *Vāli's* execution if *Sugrīva* were to misbehave like *Vāli*, after the latter's death.

“One who lusts for another's wife knows no *Artha* or *Dharma*. There is no greater fool than him; he is as good as dead. What does it matter how great he is? It is his eternal infamy. Enmity, sin, fear and infamy ever dog his fate. The man of righteous domestic life is free from this sin. His is indeed a noble manliness; it is real heroism; it is the virtue of the perfect man; it is the exemplary conduct. Such a one deserves good things of the world.” This condemnation of lust is important as showing the greatness of love by its contrast. The full significance of this conception should be understood for a correct appreciation of Valluvar's approach.

## 2.2.1.12

Valluvar next emphasises the virtue of forgiveness or forbearance. There is the great example of our Mother Earth, as the Indians feel, who bears the delvers. This reminds us according to the arrangement of the chapters of Valluvar, that we must forgive even one who lusts for another's wife. Valluvar seems to hear the message of love in the golden silence of Mother Earth preaching by her practice that all of us are her children—a message which our folk-lore emphasises. Valluvar speaks of *oṟuttal*, 'the path of punishment and violence', *poṟuttal*, 'the path of forbearance and forgiving', and *maṟattal*, 'the path of forgetting the evil done'. The Jews preach against revenge and also against bearing any grudge. They also speak of being good, because of love taking an offence in silence. Al Koran promises paradise for those who pardon others. Jesus according to Peter, demands that one should forgive seventy times seven. Manu advises the twice-born to bless the other who curses him. Therefore Valluvar's emphasis on *poṟuttal* is not unknown to others. Showing compassion towards the offenders because of the sorrow which will result is also emphasised by Valluvar. There is another statement made by Valluvar: "conquer with forbearance one who has done you harm in one's insolent pride." These are not to be equated with the views of Seneca: "the most contemptuous form of revenge is not to regard you adversary as worth your vengeance." "*Innā ceytārai-y-oṟuttal avar nāṇa nannayam ceytuviṭal.*" "The best way of punishing those who have done any harm is to do such a good turn for them, so that they will be ashamed thereby." Here, however, there is really no sign of revenge. What Valluvar is referring, is really, to the irresistible and an undying

force of love, as pointed by Augustine. According to Augustine. "love is undaunted by opposition, rejection, irresponsiveness ; it lives by giving out not by taking in. Love never faileth. Nothing is so hard that love cannot soften it. And therefore whatever opposes it must in the end give way ; freedom for its recipients also evokes from them not by contract, nor by force, but by the invincible suasion of a moral appeal—an answer of love freely given in return." Therefore Vaḷḷuvar speaks of those great men who undergo the penance of forbearance as purer than the people who have renounced the world. This forbearance is a sign of perfection. To bear with the ignorant is the might of the might. Lastly, one may note Vaḷḷuvar's path of forgetting the transgressions. It is a useful and psychologically sound advice. This shows that Tiruvaḷḷuvar tries to give us practical suggestions for following the ideal path. It is significant that this chapter on forbearance follows *piṛaṇil viḷaiyāmai* and Kampan has tried to glorify *Rama* when *Rama* was prepared to forgive *Rāvaṇa* even on the battle field, if he only surrendered *Sita*.

### 2.2.1.13

In this path of expanding love, when the social consciousness is developed, the good of any one is realised as the good of all. Nothing seems to be negligible; and a feeling of reverence and joy is experienced. If what another enjoys and possesses, in that way, is as good as one's own, how can any one envy another? Such a feeling of jealousy amounts to the destruction of our own real personality, even in the absence of enemies. One must therefore realise the evils that spring from the green-eyed-monster of jealousy. *Dharmic* progress and welfare consist in avoiding this corrosive feeling,

which kills all activity and leads to the fall of man and his society. It is the path of darkness and hell. However, prosperity resulting from jealousy, and fall resulting from its absence, often appear. This is a puzzle. Valluvar is realistic enough to accept such facts. "These have to be pondered over" he says. One commentator will assert that this means they are momentary. The other will bring the explanation of a previous birth. A third will affirm that such a sight is a mere show; for, at their very root, things are different; there is no inner peace in that prosperity or no inner suffering in that fall. This interpretation of Kāṇḍikar is probably nearer the heart of Valluvar because Kuṟaḷ hastens to add: "there is none prosperous through envy and none free from envy ever bereft of good fortune." Though the word *aḷukkāṟāmai* is negative in form, it represents a positive state of mind full of love which avoids these pitfalls in life.

#### 2.2.1.14

Ambition and desire for wealth are the expressions of a mind striving towards perfection. But this ambition should be just and spotless, not a mere hankering after low pleasures. When one, without stopping with mere jealousy, proceeds somehow to get others' possessions, this will lead to endless evil. Therefore the root must be destroyed, the root of covetousness. At this stage of progress, one cares for inner tranquillity and equanimity. To our sense of justice, Valluvar appeals.

Valluvar is practical enough to point out the infamy which will result and which will affect, not only oneself but one's own family. Those who have the glorious vision of *Dharma* are not mean enough to lose their

mental equanimity, simply because of poverty. With the expansion of love, one's subtle understanding and universal knowledge also expand. "Of what use is this comprehension, if one covets the good things in others and bemeans himself by doing insincere deeds?" Here again Valluvar emphasises the inner inspiration of love, a love which is ambitious enough to become *arul*, but which will wither away at the sight of greed for wealth and the evil desires therefor. The wealth that greed amasses is from the point of view of this inner inspiration, very very bitter indeed, at the time of its enjoyment. Honesty is the best policy; and the absence of greed may mean not only the preservation of wealth but also its increase. The man of universal comprehension knows therefore the righteous path of increasing one's wealth. Therefore the greatest victory is the proud feeling of non-desire. Valluvar's emphasis on victory and real heroism, at every step on this path of love and *Dharma*, reminds us of the conception of *Vākai* in Caṅkam poetry. The victory is here the victory of love on its glorious march. Here again, one must note that it is the mental perfection of non-desire that is emphasised, because at the stage of perfection reached by now, one may not openly perform, any evil act. But evil thoughts may be lurking behind in the mind. They have also to be uprooted; they have to be sublimated and transmuted into love.

### 2.2.1.15

We have already seen that mind expresses itself in speech and actions. We have, from that point of view, seen the necessity for kind words and humility in speech. Envy and greed may try to escape not in

deeds but in words, without any serious or outward consequences. Here lies a danger of back-biting which may create an illusion of speaking the truth in a spirit of justice. Here is deceit; fraud and pretension; for, one pretends to be kind and smiling in one's presence whilst the former speaks ill of the latter in his absence. It is much better to speak the unkind words in loud tones to the person concerned; for at least that will show his courage. Cowardice has no place on this path of love which, as already pointed out, is the path of fearless heroism. The back-biter is dangerous to society, because by sowing discord, he cuts the very root of friendship which binds the society together. "If one is so unkind as to trumpet the fault of his friends, what will he not do to strangers?" Back-biting is a heinous sin which reveals at once that the speaker is not inspired by *Dharma*. It is this danger that the author has in view—the danger which besets the path of virtue. He condemns this with a sense of righteous indignation. Valluvar feels that earth must split and bury the slanderer or throw him out. "Why does Earth put up with this burden of a slanderer? Is it because that Mother Earth is realising her *Dharma* of universal compassion? Let the slanderer not speak any word of virtue; let him do any evil deed if he wants; but let him not, for his own good, back-bite; this false mind of a back-biter is more heinous than the destruction of *Dharma* and the glorification of evil".

To die rather than back-bite is better from the point of view of the development of *Dharma*. Often Tiruvalluvar prefers death to the onslaught on *Dharma*. Physical death to one, who believes in the cycle of

births, is nothing more than a sleep, whilst the performance of evil is real spiritual death. As usual, Valluvar also gives us practical suggestions. There is the golden rule. 'Do as it will be done by, and there is also the pragmatic view that 'honesty is the best policy.' Will not slanderer provoke others, to seek out and expose the faults of the slanderer? "Before removing the mote from your neighbours' eyes remove the beam from your eyes", thus advises Jesus. "Let the slanderer scan his own faults as he does others' faults; can then there be any evil occurring to any living being?" asks Valluvar.

### 2.2.1.16

Falsehood, harsh words, back-biting and idle talk are the four kinds of speech which express the inner evil. These four have been emphasised by the Jains and Buddhists. Maṇimēkalai refers to them. Therefore on the path of love and virtue, these symptoms of evil life should disappear. The absence of falsehood appears as truth. This, in its absolute purity of love, is possible only in the perfect man. True words are the symptoms of this universal love in those who have realised the universal vision of truth. Therefore, that is described only in *Tuṟavaṟaviyal*. The absence of harsh words was emphasised in describing the kind words. Back-biting has already been condemned and, therefore, Tiruvalluvar hastens to emphasise the necessity for avoiding idle frivolous talk and vain words. Life is real and life is serious. Innocent pleasures have a place, but not idle talks which waste, not only one's own time and energy but others' valuable time and spiritual energy. Tiruvalluvar feels that frivolous talk is a heinous crime to society when it is indulged in the presence of many individuals. Nobody

seems to realise the seriousness of frivolity, as Valluvar has done. The Tamil society of his time must have felt that way, perhaps under the influence of Jainism and Buddhism. "This frivolity kindles the wrath of many. It is despised by all. No profit will arise therefrom; on the other hand, all that is good will flee from him who utter words which are devoid of virtue and good qualities; he loses his eminence and excellence. The vain talk betrays one's lack of propriety. Therefore those of great discernment and comprehension, aiming at the rare blessings of *Dharma*, never utter words devoid of great import. For theirs is the clear vision free from all gloom and cloud of illusion. Even by negligence, therefore, they will not utter meaningless words. One may speak without excellence or without justice but never useless words." Here again Valluvar's righteous indignation bursts out. "Call them not men that indulge in vain words; call them the human chaff and dust." Unless one understands the inner inspiration, of which the words are mere symptoms, it is difficult to understand this righteous indignation. Our deeds are the expressions of our own minds and the symptoms of its health or disease.

### 2.2.1.17

At the stage reached on the path of Love, as already stated, outward deeds of evil have already been avoided. But the temptation may still be there. Therefore, the mind should develop in such a way as to feel instinctively, a shudder at the idea of evil deeds. The mind has to be trained in that way in the path of love. The great and victorious warrior of love and virtue shudders at the very thought of evil deeds. The passions are now turned not against men but against the system of evil. We

have already seen the righteous indignation. Here is fear once again sublimated into the fear of evil. The Great will dread more than fire the meaningless pride of sinful acts. The fruits of evil deeds follow their doer, even as his shadow follows him. Its impressions remain in his mind and destroy the good effects of Love and *Dharma*. One, therefore, can escape any calamity whatsoever, but not this enmity of sin which follows others without diminution and which destroys one's spiritual personality. Poverty is no excuse for evil designs. What can be worse than poverty of the soul which is sure to produce outside poverty as well? There is here more of appeal to the loving comprehension and better understanding, developed through the expansion of Love. Even to those who inflict evil, the evil is not returned; they are left severely alone; that is the glory of right comprehension. Even through sheer negligence, please plot no fall for others. For, on this path of Love, righteousness itself will design your fall—a spiritual fall which governs all other falls. “If you aspire for spiritual happiness”—according to the interpretation of Pariti, “refrain from doing evil unto others.” Tiruvalluvar throws out a practical hint which is not an appeal to selfishness but an explanation of the ever-expanding soul of Love: “If you hold yourself dear, never come near any evil act whatsoever”.

### 2.2.2

Man now is free from the evils of thought, speech and act. He identifies himself with the society in which he lives. It is the social behaviour of such a man that is called *oppuravolukal* but no more it is necessary to

emphasise the outward conduct. It is the inner inspiration of Love, which has to be emphasised. On this path of Love and *Dharma*, at every stage, the expansion of Love brightens up the path and the universal vision is slowly becoming clearer and clearer. There is, therefore, greater discernment and comprehension. Instinct becomes intuition and wisdom. Therefore, at this stage, arises the real social understanding and social consciousness of the cooperative life.

When true Love develops and tries to circumscribe within its fold, the whole of the society one lives in, a brotherhood of Love develops. The final bliss of universal Love comes to be tasted, though in droplets. The oneness of the universe, not as a philosophy, but as a felt experience is the final realisation. Science proves through evolution that all living beings are literally blood brothers and that the term Mother earth is not a mere poetic conceit. The *Upaniṣads* speak of the one great *Ātman* whose expression is this manifold universe. The Buddhists, even those who deny the *Ātman* theory, emphasise the unity of life. Sāntidēva paints beautifully a scientific portrait of what Marcus Aurelius calls the kinship of everyman with the whole human race.

“We love our hands and other limbs as members of the body; then why not love other living beings as members of the universe? By constant use man comes to imagine that his body which has no self-being is a self; why then should he not conceive his self to be in his fellow also? Thus in doing service to others, pride, admiration, and desire of reward find no place, for thereby we satisfy the wants of our own self. Then as thou wouldst guard thyself against suffering and sorrow, so exercise the spirit of helpfulness, and tenderness towards the world”.

The great Roman Emperor calls this a kinship not of blood and seed, but of mind. But modern science tells us that this is also a kinship of blood and seed, the eternal life cell going on dividing continuously towards eternity from the beginning of creation all through perennial generations of living beings.

The importance of this chapter on *oppuravu* giving as it were a finality to the highest stage reached in *illaṟam* should be emphasised. At this stage *aṇpu* which is kindness overflowing to those related to us has become one with *aruḷ*. The process, as already explained, of Love budding forth in the limited circle of relatives and neighbours, when carefully nurtured, becomes kindness to others in the society. Thus without any conscious attempt on our part, this kindness, when it becomes firm and well established, has the greatest glory of social life, namely, the friendship of all concerned. Paritiyār will interpret this ‘*naṇpu*’ as *ñāṇanēyam*, ‘the spiritual brotherhood’ and he will also interpret ‘*ciṟappu*’ as *Mōkṣa* which is ultimately attained through this spiritual brotherhood. That *aruḷ* in one sense is the child of this *aṇpu*: ‘*aruḷ ennum aṇpīn kuḷavi*’. Therefore, it is the continuation or the further and ultimate development of *aṇpu*. It is this blossoming of *aṇpu* into *aruḷ* that is made clearer in this chapter on ‘*oppuravu*’. In *illaṟam*, *aruḷ* is the ideal aimed; but *aṇpu* is what is achieved. See the phrase *aruḷ vehki āṟṟiṅkaṇ niṉrān*, ‘he, aspiring for *aruḷ*, stands on the path of *Dharma*.’

In interpreting this phrase Kālīṅkar explains the conception of Love from the universal point of view. Whatever happiness or misery, which occurs to one, is common to all; and therefore, one gives oneself away to

all and this is according to Kālīṅkar *aruḷ*. It is this realisation which has been often referred to as *aṟivu*, a discerning and loving comprehension. It is giving everything away for those who deserve it; this is the aim of all our efforts and activities in amassing wealth. It is all for the other's use. What is this except *aruḷ*? One identifies himself with the society; his heart beats in unison with his community. One who lives and breathes this harmony with the world is alone said to live; others are counted among the dead. There is a complete self-sacrifice because of this feeling of identity in joy and grief. Even when it appears that one cannot help the other, one does not shrink from this identity; and there one offers away one's all to others. As Paul has said, "there is nothing Love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, to its hope and its endurance". "The Love energy", to use a phrase of Sorokin, "stored down in the hearts of these men on the path of Love, creates this mysterious power, ready to pour it out in helping others, when other means are impossible." Therefore, there is nothing greater either in this world or the other than this shared feeling of harmony or communion or commingling with the society at large. The man who experiences this bliss of communion with society, is never poor; or, real poverty is the absence of the power of Love to help others, through this loving sacrifice. He willingly bears the Cross and welcomes any fall or loss, as a precious gift, to be purchased even by the sale of one's self, if it is engendered by this spirit of self-sacrifice, and inspired by the harmony he feels with the society. There is a joy in this suffering shared and relieved.

## 2.2.21

There are three famous similies which describe three ever-increasing stages of self-sacrifice. The water reservoir intended for the village is full and overflowing. The whole village hastens to quench its thirst. Such is the wealth of the great man of wisdom and comprehension. He understands that what he has, like the water in the reservoir, is useful only for others ; if not given, it evaporates or it stagnates and putrefies. One has at least to go to the reservoir ; but there is another stage of self-sacrifice where the self-sacrifice of its own accord occurs in the midst of and just in front of those who require it. Therefore, there is the greater man of self-sacrifice who is full of *Dharma* and Love. He is like “the sweet fruit-bearing tree” in the very heart of the village, full of ripe fruits—so ripe in time, as to fall into the hands of the deserving many. The tree cannot help ripening and giving away the ripe fruits. This person is almost unconscious of his self-sacrifice, though it is offered at the very door at the opportune moment to those who require it. “He loves all” according to Parimēlaḷakar; “He is loved by all” according to Maṇakkuṭavar. There is still a higher stage of self-sacrifice. There is a tree whose every part is used as a medicine; and that tree, in addition, happens to be in a place, easy of approach at any part of the year, when it cannot escape being easily and completely used away as medicine for curing the sufferings of others. It is an embodiment of absolute self-sacrifice, a complete self-effacement in the cause of Love and society. But there is the fulfilment. The smaller existence is dissolved into the universal existence.

There is another simile which makes it clear that *oppuravu* has become one with *aruḷ* to be further deve-

loped into the supreme Love of universal consciousness. The cloud gives away all it has without any reserve. In a sense it gives itself away, not in its own interest but for the good of the world. It showers its blessings; and its waters come down and become one with the soil taking the latter's colour, taste and fragrance. Here is an example of supreme self-sacrifice and a feeling of complete identity with those to whom it helps. The cloud is formed somewhere but rains down somewhere else, cooling the parched earth. There is no relationship between the cloud and the soil. It is an unconditional universal Love or *arul*. It is not a kindness overflowing only to those near and dear to us. There is no question here of seeking any return. The cloud here is a standing example of *oppuravu*. This emphasises benevolence seeking no return. As St. Augustine has pointed out, "Love demands no return and imposes no conditions; it is one great force, in the world, which does not bargain. It goes on giving even if there is no Love in response and even if one rejects." Therefore it fetters no more the hands of him who receives it. The rain-bearing cloud full of waters feels a relief and attains its freedom only when it gives. This is again the great characteristic feature of Love as pointed out by St. Augustine: "Love makes the giver free." Here comes the distinction between Love and lust. Lust or passion makes us its blind slaves. But Love leaves us free and frees us from lust. Again the third characteristic feature of love mentioned by Augustine is also exemplified in the cloud. Its love is irresistible, "undaunted by opposition, rejection or irresponsiveness. It lives

by giving out and not by taking in.” Like the rain which never fails us, Love never fails us. No soil is hard for the rain or Love. The flood of Love or rain moves along, in spite of opposition by its very coolness and kindness. All opposition is dissolved in Love through the invisible force of its righteous appeal. Thus is seen the significance of the simile of the clouds, as emphasising the great truth about Love revealed by St. Augustine. This emphasises also, that, by this time, Love in *illaṛam* has blossomed into *aruḷ*, the very basis of *tuṟavaṛam*.

## 2.2.22

This overflowing of universal Love becomes patent in the munificence of the evolved soul. The giving of alms in charity has been emphasised by the Jews by the Christians and by the Muslims. Sometimes this charity is emphasised in terms of an investment in this world, to be paid back in the Heavens with profit thousand-fold. The *Karma* theory gives room for this conception. Valluvar also refers to this. “To relieve the wasting hunger of the needy shows, the earner of wealth has found a proper place to lay by.” Maṇakkuṭavar reminds us of the conception of *pāttūṇ vāḷkkai*. This interpretation is strengthened by another Kuṟaḷ, “It is impossible for the fiery disease of hunger even to approach him who follows the path of sharing his food with others.” Maṇakkuṭavar also interprets *alipaci* as the hunger which destroys all the human qualities. It is possible to interpret Maṇakkuṭavar in modern times as referring to the humanising effects of munificence which prevents the destruction of humanity and society. Munificence, in destroying inhuman forces, makes

possible society and finds a safe place for wealth. But this idea of investment is not the final appeal of Valluvar. We have already referred to this conception of *Dharma* as sung by the Caṅkam poet Muṭamōciyār, ‘*immai ceytatu maṟumaikkumenuṁ aṟavilaivāṇikan āy allan; piṟaṟum cānrōr cenṟa neṟi ena, āṅku-p-paṭṭanṟu avan kaivaṇmaiye*’ (*Puṟam*). “*Āy* is not a trader in *Dharma* investing his money in charity for reaping its profits in the other world. He is munificent by habit following the traditional path of the perfect man.” That is his nurture and that is his family greatness. Valluvar also says that munificence is the mark of real noble birth to give before one expresses his misery of poverty, to give away without expressing one’s own painful misery of helplessness and to give so that the needy man never go to others for further help.

The munificence is also praised as proper conduct of a human being, irrespective of *Dharma*. There are certain duties which go to make human nature and in all those cases, Valluvar emphasises that duty as something to be performed without reference to any spiritual glory. This makes for real humanism and the next chapter, as Kāḷiṅkar points out, emphasises the great conception of *pukaḷ*. “Even if it is the path of virtue, it is an evil to receive from others; even if the Heavens are denied it is always good to give.” Tiruvalluvar holds this charity as of supreme importance to man. Nothing is worse than death; but even that becomes blissful when charity is impossible. This is one of the few cases where

Valluvar prefers death rather than the giving up of any duty.

He also praises munificence or charity as something greater than the path of *tapas*. It is a higher *Dharma* from this point of view. The *tapasvins* endure hunger. But they are powerless to relieve hunger, a power the munificent man has. The path of Love is made clear in this way. The *tapasvins* store up the power of Love and the munificent man forces this eternal Love to quench the fire of the threatening evil powers of the dehumanising forces. This conception of loving *Dharma* can be compared to Mahatma Gandhi's conception of charity as a worship of *Daridrañārāyaṇa*.

There is one another point emphasised by Valluvar. The path of Love is the path of Bliss. Schweitzer speaks of his experience of this power of charity, the power of helping others. "I can save him from the days of torture; that is what I feel as my great and ever new privilege. Pain is a more terrible Lord of mankind than even Death himself." No wonder Tiruvalluvar welcomes death when one cannot cure the most painful and corrosive hunger. As it has always been remarked, by even the common people in our land, munificence especially that which is offered as charity to the needy brings its immediate joy and love. Valluvar refers to this joy and bliss of giving. "The hard-hearted who store up their wealth and use it all do not know this joy. It is indeed more miserable than beggary to enjoy all alone the accumulated goods. There is therefore greater pleasure in giving before the other expressed his need. It is unfortunate and miserable that one should come and beg at our

doors. But that is momentary; for as soon as his needs are satisfied, there is the divine bliss inspired by the happy and contented face of the human soul”.

### 2.2.3

The concluding chapter is called *Puka*]. Tiruvalluvar has emphasised the ephemeral nature of the things of the world: “The flow of fortune is like the gathering of a crowd around a drama; its end is like the melting of the crowd at its close.” Human life is not eternal. “Life stands on the edge of a sword which slowly saws it through, pretending to be a measurement of time called a day.” This is the glory of the world that one who was yesterday is no more today. Death is but sleep and birth an awakening therefrom. The relation between the body and the soul, is also not permanent. The bird leaves in time its nest never to come back. So does the life fly away from the body. What a pity! There is no lasting abode for this life which resides hard-pressed within this miserable body. The ignorance of those who mistake the ephemeral for the everlasting is of the worst kind. Those who do not realise the momentariness of their life, alas, imagine, not millions of thoughts but many many more.

Thus having described the unfortunate condition of the world, in terms of what Tolkāppiyar calls *kāñci*, Valluvar proceeds to describe the *meyyuṇarvu*, as already pointed out. Before the tongue is restrained from movement and hiccough comes as the vanguard of death, good acts should be done. That is our invasion against death. That is his advice to conquer death. All wealth is evanescent. Therefore whenever one gets wealth, one must hasten to perform things which will

endure. This is his advice for conquering the ephemeral nature of the things of the world. The 'I' and the 'Mine' have to be transmuted into the universal Love in *tuṛavaṛam*.

### 2.2.31

But in *illaṛam* the universal love still speaks in terms of one's own society, one's own world, though these have become almost universal. Therefore there is a place for two great things, one the feeling of joy at the conquest of death and two, the establishment of permanence before one attains the joy of universalism. One is the joy of munificence, as already described, the other is the establishment of Fame. What else is there of greater profit to man? The poets sing the glories of the famous man. There is a verse addressed to Cōlan *Nalaṅkiḷli* in Caṅkam poetry: "Few are the people who have achieved the greatness of poetry rising up like that of lotus rising up above the surface of water, whilst many are those who have disappeared like the lotus leaves never rising above the surface of the water. Those who are blessed with fame sung by poets go to Heaven in a divine chariot driven by no charioteer." Therefore Vaḷḷuvar speaks of praise as the only Fame which arises from curing the hunger of the destitute—the real conquest over dehumanising forces. It is a power of creative joy. In this impermanent world, nothing is permanent except Fame. Kāḷiṅkar and Parimēlaḷakar will assert that even the Heavens will praise the man of Fame rather than the Saints. Vaḷḷuvar explains this mystery. Men of Fame perform a miracle. Their mortal body dies; but the permanent body of fame grows for ever. The body of

Fame is eternal whilst their physical body withers away. Who else can perform this miracle except these men of Fame? Therefore it is within one's own power to become famous. It is real infamy not to achieve this Fame; not to beget this glorious child of Fame. Here is a glorious conception of Fame where man by his power of charity and Love achieves something of permanence in all walks of life, wresting the laurels of victory from opposing Nature trying to devour us and our wealth. The Fame of poets and philosophers and saints like Valluvar, the Fame of great men like of Aśoka and Buddha ever remind us of the glories of human life.

#### 2.2.4

It is therefore from this point of spiritual development that *tuṛavaṛam* begins. We come back to *tuṛavaṛam* to view it as a development of *illaṛam*. Even in *illaṛam* the poet was always having in his mind the ultimate goal to be reached. *Aṟuḷ* is the basis of *tuṛavaṛam* but as already stated and as already developed, even in the limited sphere of *illaṛam*, *tuṛavaṛam* can be achieved. Therefore *tuṛavaṛam* is addressed to both the classes of *aṛam*.

#### 2.2.41

For instance *kūṭā-v-oḷukkam* naturally implies the rules and regulations of the recluse. But when Tiruvalluvar asserts the futility of the outward signs of renunciation such as the matted hair or the shaven head and insists on the avoidance of the ways which

the world condemns, he implies to suggest that the real mental attitude of *tuṛavaṛam* rather than the assumption of the *sanyāsin's* garb is important. Therefore one can argue that it is possible to follow *tuṛavaṛam* even if one remains within the limits of *illaṛam*. What is important is not the outward shape and form but the effect flowing from those actions. The crooked lute raises sweet music; the upright arrow spells death.

## 2.2.42

In the chapter on *Kaḷḷāmai* Vaḷḷuvar speaks of '*aruḷ karuti anpu uṭaiyārātal*', 'those who aim at universal love and achieve the blessings of limited love.' Certainly this contemplates the people of *illaṛam*. This chapter on *Kaḷḷāmai* contemplates certain possessions which will be more appropriate to the people of *illaṛam* in practising *tuṛavaṛam*. '*aḷaviṇkaṇ niṇṇu oḷukal*' is another phrase occurring in the chapter on *Kaḷḷāmai*. *Aḷavu* is taken to mean the *pramāṇas* or the theory of knowledge. Perhaps one may take it as referring to the limitations to be placed on one's wants and possessions. To have anything more than one's necessary minimum requirements is not proper in the path of love and may be considered as misappropriation. Unfortunately none of the commentators give this interpretation, though this idea is as old as Jainism. Interpreted in this way, Vaḷḷuvar may be said to contemplate here the people of '*illaṛam*' following '*tuṛavaṛam*'.

## 2.2.43

In the chapter on *Vāymai* 'Truth' there is the famous *Kuṛaḷ* about the great man who speaks the truth

with all his heart being greater than those who perform penance or *tapas* along with charity or *dānam*. *Dānam* 'gift' is the characteristic feature of *illaṟam* while *tapas* is the characteristic feature of *tuṟavaṟam*. Therefore ' *tavattoṭu tāṇam ceyvār* ', ' those who perform both *tapas* and *dānam* ' must refer to the people who are in *illaṟam* but who practise along with it *tuṟavaṟam*. We have seen ' *pukaḷ* ' is the glory of *illaṟam* and Tīruvaḷḷuvar states that there is no fame as great as truthfulness. Though it is possible to explain this in other ways, it lends itself to be taken as a reference to those who observe both *illaṟam* and *tuṟavaṟam*.

## 2.2.44

In the chapter on Anger, as is usual with Vaḷḷuvar, he discusses the topic from the basic point of view common to all. Anger is against the fundamental principle of Love with its joy and pleasure of life. Therefore anger which kills both these is the greatest enemy of man. Against the stronger people, anger is dangerous. But even against the weak, there is nothing worse. The point of view of this Kuṟaḷ is more appropriate to *illaṟam*. ' *cinam ennum cēntāraik kolli* ' is a beautiful phrase referring to anger as the destroyer of the associates. Vaḷḷuvar continues to add that it burns the float of dear kinsmen kept in reserve. This statement is certainly applicable to the people of *illaṟam*. The highest glory of this loving heart which avoids anger is described in another Kuṟaḷ. The injury inflicted may be like giving one a fire bath; even then if it is possible it is excellent to avoid anger. This is the Kuṟaḷ we have already referred to, in our discussion on Forbearance. The stage here

described is the further development of that spirit of forbearance. There is the last Kuṛaḷ in the chapter on Anger. "Those who exceed the limit of anger are but like unto dead men, suffering rigor mortis. Those who have renounced Anger are greater than the greatest saints, who have renounced the world." This Kuṛaḷ will not be a puzzle if interpreted from the point of view here developed, as referring to people who perform *illaṛam* and *tuṛavaṛam*.

2 2.45

Again in the chapter on *Kollāmai*, 'Non-killing' Vaḷḷuvar repeats the beautiful phrase '*pakuttunṭu pal-l-uyir ōmpuṭal*', 'to share one's food or wealth and thus, to protect many lives' which we have read in the description of *illaṛam*. Again there is the Kuṛaḷ, "Even if the wealth leading to happiness were increased without limits by killing, that wealth arising from slaughter is the worst kind of wealth". This reference to wealth certainly contemplates the man in *illaṛam* and lends additional support to our theory. The chapter on *tuṛavu* speaks of cutting away attachments. But the central idea of renunciation emphasised, as already noted, is the renunciation of the feeling of the 'I' and the 'Mine'. If this is the main spring of *tuṛavu* it is open to the man in *illaṛam* also to follow the path of *tuṛavu*. As it is often pointed out in Indian literature, this is a safer course and we have the great story of *Janaka*, the great Emperor becoming greater than the sages who have renounced the world, though he was himself within the bounds of *illaṛam*. Therefore this interpretation is not against the tradition of India or Tamil Land,

## 2.2.5

Therefore Tiruvaḷḷuvar describes in *aṟattu-p-pāl* a view of life which starts with the natural attachment to the family; but gradually its love passes beyond the narrow limitations through ever-expanding circles of Love till it encompasses one's own society. Then begins the development of this Love so as to blossom into Universalism. Nothing is repressed where everything is given a righteous and proper place. It leads to the development of human perfection which means in the path of Love, the development of Universalism. As already pointed out, this is nothing new. We have taken a basic Pan-Indian conception. But when we compare this with the Tamilian tradition of Caṅkam age, the conception of *illaṟam* and *tuṟavaṟam* as contemplated in Tirukkuṟaḷ becomes clearer. Even here, the approach of Tiruvaḷḷuvar is found to be unique though not revolutionary.

## 2.2.51

It will be thus seen that in the description of the development of Love, he not only emphasises this development but at every stage he points out the corresponding expansion of discernment and comprehension, knowledge and wisdom. In this connection, one may remember Spinoza's conception of Love. Spinoza's Love is different from the mere appetite or lust. Love is, according to him, to be freed from the fetters of emotion, and that is done by proper understanding and control by intelligence. To him, therefore, it is the intellectual love of the animal towards God which is the part of intimate love wherewith God loves Himself.

Though Tiruvalluvar does not make Love purely an intellectual love, he does emphasise the importance of discernment. This will appear from the way in which he emphasises that comprehension and discernment are in proportion to the expansion of Love. In this way Tiruvalluvar escapes the degradations of emotion and the pride of intelligence.

### 2.2.52

He holds the balance even between *illaṟam* and *tuṟavaṟam*; for, he contemplates the possibility of *tuṟavaṟam* being the continuation of *illaṟam* or the possibility of practising *tuṟavaṟam* within *illaṟam* itself. He holds the balance also between theory and practice, between idealism and pragmatism. From this point of view, the suggestions for translating the ideals into action are valuable and are in accord with modern psychology.

### 2.2.53

The importance of this, the path of virtue starting from the Love of the married couple, is significant. As Saint Augustine pointed out, "Love of whatever kind is always a living power; never can love be idle in the lover's path; always it moves and drives." From this point of view *Kāmattu-p-pāl* becomes important, since it is called *aṟam*. If *aṟam* is the development of the selfless Love already experienced, that experience happens ordinarily in the minds of the loving couple. If this basic love is not experienced, the further development is difficult to understand and practise. It is this experience of Love that is described in *Kāmattu-p-pāl*.

### 3. KĀMATTUPPĀL

#### 3.1

Tiruvalluvar, as explained in our study of *aṛattu-p-pāl*, has emphasised Love as the basis of human life. This is in accordance with the modern theories of psycho-analysis, though these theories express this principle in a shockingly revolutionary way. Tiruvalluvar purifies this basic passion and sublimates it. He starts with the love, existing between husband and wife. To him therefore the physical aspect of pure love is nothing mean. Marriage is a glorious institution. But when there is no Love, one embraces the mere physical frame no more than a corpse, as Valluvar will describe it, in his chapter on 'Public women'. The physical embrace becomes human and divine, when it is in addition a communion of two loving souls. The Tamilians conceived it in terms of a fabulous bird with two heads but one life. They also felt that such a love is the crown and glory of a communion, developing through atleast seven previous births. Therefore when such a man and a woman, though unknown to each other in the present birth, meet all of a sudden, they are by nature and Providence, attracted to each other; and their inner personalities become one in love. Thus, even before marriage, there is this innate experience of love. This is called in Tamil '*kaḷavu*'. It is pre-marital love, where each soul steals the heart of the other. *Kaḷavu* or stealth emphasises the natural or unconscious process, where the heart of one lover is attracted to the other, even as magnet attracts iron. Tiruñānacampantar will speak of the Lord or God-lover as '*uḷḷam kavār kaḷvaṇ*', 'one who steals the heart

of the beloved'. Kampan, following Nammālvār, will speak here of the coming of the Lord or lover without any actual coming in, because it is really a manifestation of what is already latent — *Vārātē vara vallāy*. The unconscious becomes conscious.

### 3.2

In this theory of the Tamilians, even physical attraction is something providential, when there is the background of pure love. It is an act of Providence or Nature that their loving souls commingle at first sight, Nature and Providence as it were conspiring to bring them together in a suitable environment, at the appropriate time and place. Such a love is naturally best suited for blossoming into universal love. The Caṅkam poets have emphasised this great truth. We are told that the great poet Kapīlar to explain the message of Tamil to an Aryan King who was himself a musician, composed the great love poetry of *Kuṟiñci-p-pāṭṭu*. After emphasising the chaste love of two such lovers, the poet gives expression to this great ideal of this love when he makes the lady-love express it. "When we live together with our doors open, feeling inspired by hospitality to all those who come, we will enjoy what remains after they are fed, as the crowning glory of this joint life of sacrifice, each seeing in the other's Love the reflected glory, the reflected joy or bliss of the contented society." In some such way we can paraphrase the prayer of the heroine, full of poetic suggestion.

Seen in this light, the Tamilian conception of love between a man and a woman looks almost divine.

It is no wonder that in the age of *Bhakti* revival, this love was actually interpreted as the natural Love between God and the loving soul. Perhaps this later age read the *Kāmattu-p-pāl* of Tiruvaḷḷuvar in some such way. Tiruvaḷḷuvar further purifies the Caṅkam conception of love. Thus purified the divine-like Love was identified by Tirumūlar with God in his explanation of his philosophy, starting as he does as a seasoned teacher, from the known and proceeding to the unknown. Therefore the contribution of Tiruvaḷḷuvar in this field should be emphasised.

### 3.3

The Caṅkam poetry speaks of five aspects of this love: *kuṟiñci* where the lovers meet and become one in loving embrace; *pālai* or separation where there is the exquisite pang of separation where the pure gold of love shines all the more brilliant thus sublimated in the fire of selfless sacrifice and love, for the higher cause of state, society or learning; *neytal* or a feeling of despair sometimes clouding this life of Love where also one meets the suffused glow of Love, amidst trying circumstances, in refusing to die and in continuing to live only for the sake of the other, in the fond hope against hope of meeting the other; *mullai* or the joint domestic life and *marutam* or the sulky mood which often arises even in these loving hearts.

The last mentioned aspect of *marutam* is exemplified, in Caṅkam poetry, by the extra-marital relations of the hero. Perhaps the society of women was cut into two, one, of the chaste women who took up the duties of

domestic life and of the continuation of the race and, two, of the free women who though yielding to love refuse to shoulder this duty of a family life but willingly undertook the onerous burden of keeping the torch of the fine arts ever burning more and more gloriously, through themselves sacrificing to a life of art and beauty, of music and dance. Perhaps in such a society, a man's devotion to art throws him in the midst of public women, necessitating a kind of a divided allegiance and all that it implies. The institution of public women cannot always be kept in this ideal position and it descends to the level of prostitution. The lady - love in wed-lock cannot be expected to be happy when she suspects the extra-marital relationship of her lover. She, however, concentrates on the domestic duties demanded by the society. She may excuse the Lover but there has to be at least a righteous resentment because of the family reputation and social ideal. The hero, however, is able to pacify the lady-love because of the prevailing ideal of a social tradition which demands that in the presence of the children and guests, the lovers should, not only show no mutual resentment, but also welcome them really with their commingled hearts of love.

But in any ideal love, this extra-marital relationship is certainly a blot, whatever social reasons may be advanced for its existence. Tiruvalluvar has condemned the institution of public women in his philosophy of government and society. If even high diplomacy and state policy cannot tolerate it, how can pure love find a place for it? Therefore, he does not bring in the public women for exemplifying the *marutam* aspect of Love. That is one of the major contributions of Valluvar. According to one commentary, the last five chapters deal with *marutam*; according to another the last four

chapters alone deal with *marutam*. This *marutam* here is only the natural difficulty involved in two different personalities, nurtured under two different family environments, coming to commingle and to form a new creative family type. The fusion is not effected in a day. It is a slow process of give and take, sometimes giving rise to misunderstandings but only at the surface level.

### 3.4

Love at first sight appears, as it were, as a flash of lightning. It is a kind of a revolution when the latent love becomes manifest, leading to physical changes and emotional involvements. This is *kuṛiñci*. This is absolutely a new experience. The physical beauty brings the unconscious attraction to the conscious level. It looks as though that some divine enchantment is overpowering the lovers. The lover is dazed in mind. He feels it as a kind of divine experience; separation he feels will be death. But he senses all the same a life-giving love, full of innocence and modesty, overflowing in the very look of the beloved. He stands almost intoxicated with that love, a hero of many wars but today succumbing to the loving beauty. Her furtive glance and subdued smile are hopeful where words avail nothing. Next follows the divine bliss of her embrace, a bliss which is a feast to all the senses, sweeter than the pleasures of the world of the lotus-eyed Lord, granting him such joys as he desires from every object whenever it is desired. It is not merely a physical pleasure. The very soul is rejuvenated and therefore it is a spiritual bliss. There is also the happiness of fulfilment very much similar to the joy of an ethical life of one who

enjoys his allotted share, only after distributing his wealth to all those who deserve it. It is a bliss revealing not only new knowledge and wisdom but also an insight unknown even to his erstwhile rich experience and lofty education. . . Separation cannot be imagined by him; even a slight waft of the wind coming in between them cannot be tolerated.

### 3.5

This is the first experience. But such an experience cannot be continuous. There is the necessity for separation for various reasons. They have to retrain themselves for a new life, a new life of give and take. A complete concord has to be created avoiding all misunderstandings. It is this attempt with all its early failures and successes at mutual understanding leading ultimately to a deeper commingling of two personalities, that is looked upon as *ūṭal* or *marutam* by Tiruvalluvar. The conception is emphasised in the last five or four chapters. This is a new interpretation of *ūṭal* 'sulky mood'. Tiruvalluvar is not cutting himself away from the ancient tradition. He is interpreting it in a new way. There is reference to others loving the hero in Tirukkuṟaḷ. But that is not a fact but a kind of teasing of love by the heroine who thus emphasises how the hero has become the loving apple of the eye of all the world. It is from this point of view that the chapter on *pulavi nuṇukkam* or the subtle bouderie, a chapter full of dramatic poetry, should be interpreted. This is indeed a new way of looking at *ūṭal*.

But the misunderstanding should not take a deeper root. It should not become hatred. The sulky mood makes the succeeding mood of love, a precious gain

worthy of achievement by love. It makes the physical embrace intellectually great, as a new insight, mentally satisfying as resolving all conflicts, ethically glorious as a self-sacrifice and spiritually blissful as a commingling of souls. It should not descend to the level of mere carnal pleasure. The experience of love should be always fresh like the morning breeze. Sulky mood is a kind of a restraint. It reveals the depth of other's love through the other's keen suffering at the delay. It is like the precious salt giving taste to the food when added to it in right proportion. An over doze of salt, however, spoils the taste of food. A prolongation of the sulky mood amounts to torturing one who is already in agony. If loving embrace does not succeed the sulky mood, the withering creeper of love will be cut at its root. Therefore love without strife tastes stale like an over-ripe fruit; Love without sulkiness tastes sour like the unripe fruit. There is an ethical grandeur and a beauty of feminine perfection, when the flowery eyes of the beloved feign a sulky mood. But it is not easy to put up this show; the heart melts soon in love in the presence of the Lord. The sulky mood therefore is really an intellectual and physical struggle. Her modesty flies away in his presence. This is the substance of the chapter on *neñcoṭu pulattal* where the heroine condemns her failing heart. The final consummation of this glorious life of love is found in '*ūṭal uvakai*', 'the joy of the Sulky mood,'. The complete understanding of each other, the deeper insight into other's nature, the resulting bliss of this identity of feeling and insight reveal the perfection reached by the lovers. He is free from defects. But the sulky mood pays rich dividend; for it reveals the depth of his love. Therefore there is no heaven greater than this sulky mood of love. In

this competition of mutual sulky mood, those who are defeated really win the laurels of love. Bouderie is the charm of love; and the charm of that again is the sweet embrace.

This is the resolution of the conflicts when two different personalities, nurtured under two different environments and having two different physical and emotional developments come together for becoming complementary to each other.

### 3.6

There is another kind of conflict raised by the social environment which demands separation and sacrifice in love, for the fulfilment of certain social duties, in war and in peace, in education and religion and for the fulfilment of certain family duties in earning the livelihood or wealth. This is *pālai* or separation. This conflict is therefore different from the other conflict exhibited in *ūṭal*. Here there is a sharing, a common sharing in suffering and sacrifice. Here the two hearts are drawn nearer and nearer to each other. There is always *uṇartal* or mutual insight and understanding. Thus *uṇartal* becomes perfect in both *pirital* and *ūṭal*. *Pirital* is also an *ūṭal* though with a difference. *Ūṭal uṇartal* and *kūṭal* summarise the story of love. In the discharge of their duties they share the sufferings. Here therefore is exhibited love in all its glory, in all its pristine purity. Suffering, common suffering rather than happiness, is the majestic grandeur of tragedy and therefore this story of separation which has a touch of the tragic in it

appeals to the human heart in a mysterious way. Akanānūru has fifty percent of its verses describing this aspect of separation and suffering, whilst all other aspects of love share amongst themselves the remaining two hundred. According to Paripperumāl there are in Valluvar eighteen chapters dealing with separation, whilst the first meeting is described in three chapters and ūṭal in four chapters.

In other words *kuṟiñci* covers three chapters, *marutam* covers four chapters whilst fourteen chapters deal with separation. The question arises what happens to *mullai* and *neytal*. They must be deemed to be included under separation. *Pālai* and *neytal* are two varying degrees of separation. *Mullai* often amounts to remaining at home and sharing the domestic and social duties; but sometimes it is exemplified in the sharing of duties and sufferings of social life which in that way separates them. This is the common sharing which is the characteristic feature of chaste love or *mullai*. Therefore *mullai* also reaches its perfection in a kind of separation, as it is evident in *Mullai-p-pāṭṭu*. According to my old teacher late Mr. Chelvakesavaraya Mudaliar, an old copy which he had of the commentary by Maṇakkuṭavar divides the 25 chapters of *Kāmattu-p-pāl* into 5 divisions of 5 chapters each. The first five belong to *kuṟiñci*, the second five to *pālai*, the third five to *mullai*, the fourth five to *neytal* and the fifth five to *marutam*. Therefore the chapters assigned to separation by Paripperumāl will cover *pālai*, *mullai* and *neytal*.

Though Paripperumāl tries to justify this three-fold division of *Kāmattu-p-pāl* on the basis of

*Vātsyāyana*, he himself feels the force of objections to his own theory and therefore finally concludes that this three-fold division of *Kāmattu-p-pāl* into union, separation and the sulky mood can be explained according to the Tamil convention itself—for *kūṭal*, *pirital* and *ūṭal* are well known terms in the Tamil theory of love. Whatever it be, this way of looking at Tirukkuraḷ clearly brings out the psychological importance of this three-fold division in the development of a personality well integrated with family and society. Though Paripperumāl tells us this is a Tamil convention, such a convention finds its finest exemplification only in Tirukkuraḷ.

This is certainly much more elucidating than the older distinction between *kaḷavu* and *kaṟpu* which is the division of the *kāmattu-p-pāl* according to Parimēlaḷakar. According to him the first seven chapters deal with *kaḷavu* and the remaining eighteen chapters deal with *kaṟpu*. Parimēlaḷakar also feels that by *kaṟpu* one has to understand here only separation. *Marutam* which implies, extra-marital relationship according to the old tradition is also in the opinion of Parimēlaḷakar a kind of separation from the lady-love. It is a nearer separation as contrasted with *pālai* which is a more distant separation. Therefore *mullai* and *neytal* also must be deemed to have been included under *pālai* or separation. It is very unfortunate that Parimēlaḷakar should bring in public women when Tirukkuraḷ does not justify such an interpretation. He misses the greatness of Valluvar's contribution in reinterpreting *marutam* on a psychological basis. Parimēlaḷakar feels that Valluvar follows the Sanskrit tradition in describing love, only

in terms of union and separation and that therefore he has included *mullai*, *neytal* and *marutam* under *pālai* or separation which according to him is the characteristic feature of the major part of *kāṛpu*. On the face of it, this is a forced interpretation. All these difficulties arise because it is not realised that there is an original contribution by Tiruvaḷḷuvar who in spite of his deep knowledge of the Tamil and Sanskrit traditions, cuts new grounds as explained by Paripperumāl. The importance of this distinction has already been emphasised.

### 3.7

This new approach makes the very headings of chapters on separation illuminating. After the first embrace and union, the spiritually intoxicated lover gives expression to his experience of his beloved - her tenderness and modesty and her fresh beauty and charm which seem to put to flight the beauties of Nature. He thus praises in a highly imaginary poetry, the inner joy inspired by her. Then follows a much more restrained statement on the greatness of this Love. It is a commingling of complementary aspects of human personalities making life richer and sweeter, and really creating a new integrated life of the physical body and soul—a never-to-be-forgotten realisation of the union of two souls ever present in their eyes and hearts. Then follows the next stage where this Union has to be accepted by the world at large. *Dharma* and Love demand this and therefore there can be no sense of false shame. This is expressed in terms of the traditional language of *maṭal* where the hero in the face of the opposition

from the parents of his lady proposes to cut away his body by being dragged on a horse-like vehicle shaped out of saw-like leaf stalks of the palmyra. From the point of view of the heroine there is the fear that their love is being suspected by the scandal mongers without the realisation by others of true love. This fortunately draws lovers together—a great psychological truth emphasised by Valluvar. All along, the lovers though united between themselves stood separated from the world. But time comes when they have no separation because of the social duties—a separation which is felt slowly creeping into their life; it looks as though it spells death. Such is the depth of their love. But soon its necessity is realised though gradually, and therefore, there arises the conflict of emotions and wandering thoughts where the confidence in Love stands as though shattered. The body itself in spite of all her reasonings rebels against this separation, it becomes weak; the healthy colour fades; sleep refuses to come; the tears rush to the eyes. There is thus the conflict between restraining modesty and overpowering love—a conflict which corrodes her life. His thoughts in separation make her miserable and there is a cry of despair. And yet in spite of her seeming condemnation of his love, her eyes long for the sight of the lover, but only to suffer greater pain; and she speaks as though taking a revenge on this eye which gave her the sight of the beauty of her Lord. In a poetic way, she feels separated from her eyes, and seems to enjoy in a revengeful mood the miserable tears of the eyes. There is certainly a bit of madness even in this poetic effusion, which therefore shows the

despondent mood. Then follows the fading of her beautiful colour which but speaks the inner suffering. She knows that the separation is something to be put up with; but the heart refuses to listen to the dictates of the intellect. There succeeds the stage when she feels her isolation in a mood of suspicion, that the lover is not feeling the pangs of separation while discharging his duties. Coming out of this shell of isolation, the lovers give expression to their feeling of misery to others. Unlike liquor love is sweet even when recollected. Here again there are conflicting thoughts, about the other. Is he thinking of the love or is he restraining the thoughts of love? How could anyone forget? "He will not be angry however I may think of him" cries the lady. At the next stage, loving thoughts become so firmly rooted that even in dreams they occur and nature seems to restore the joy, at least in the dreams, but only to make the waking hours much more disappointing. This life of isolation is dreadful, and the lover looks around the beauties of nature, the calm and retiring evening when the whole world of lovers, the world of bees and birds, rush back to their sacred haven of a loving home, to be hugged in by their beloved. This increases by contrast her feeling of separation. What is heaven to others is to her a veritable hell and she condemns the evening time and all its beauties as messengers of death. Her body is still further weakened; the eyes lose their lustre; her shoulders become emaciated, the shoulders which embraced him now declare his faithlessness by losing the bangles which slip away. In her growing feeling of isolation, she withdraws into herself. In a mood of despair she speaks to her heart as though it were separate from her. Here again conflicting emotions

are given expression to. A further stage is reached where unable to restrain the misery, she openly gives expression to her love as she had never done before. Her feeling of modesty can no longer restrain such an open exhibition of love. The conflicts are being resolved. But this, at first takes the form of succumbing to the inevitable. She feels that her heart, her body and her eyes in spite of herself hanker after him. The lover also rushes back to her. The separation makes their reunion as fresh as the first union. There is however the outside restraint. But the inner feelings transgress their bounds. This restraint makes the innocent charms of human nature, much more wonderful and beautiful. Her love is lying hidden in her smile like the fragrance locked up in the bud almost amounting to cunningness which is expressed through eyes. There is the pain of her love and she begs for relief. At the next stage there is hankering after embrace, where all thoughts of finding fault in the other fly away. It is a kind of intoxication but a spiritual intoxication where one indulges in drinking even when one feels the evil effects of that intoxication. There is no hard heartedness in love. Even tenderer than a flower is love and few there be who know its delicacy and deal with it gently. Thus ends every thing in the embrace of love.

This summary at once reveals something new in *Akam* poetry. This is much more truthful to psychology and escapes from the tradition which often robs poetry of its charm.

After this resolution of the conflicts raised by social duties, follows the complete integration of the

two personalities as described in terms of *ūṭal* and *kūṭal*, already referred to. Thus is seen the original contribution of Vaḷḷuvar in describing the development of this integration though seemingly within the frame work of the older traditions.

The purists in Tamil have a bias against the word *kāmam* which is according to them a Sanskrit word. Therefore, they would prefer the name *inṭattu-p-pāl* instead of *Kāmattu-p-pāl*. There is also another reason, why *kāmam* has suffered a kind of deterioration in its signification. The Jains and others believing in renunciation as the highest perfection reached by man, naturally condemned *kāmam* as something demeaning. Cintāmaṇi, therefore, sings: '*kāmam ilittiṭappaṭṭatanrē*,' '*kāmam* has been condemned as the meanest'. But this is not the ancient Tamil tradition which, as already hinted, Kapilar explained to an Aryan King. Tamil was there and elsewhere actually identified with this *kāmam*. Gradually, in course of time, the opposition from the Buddhists and the Jains increased. Even the Vedic scholars joined in this onslaught on *kāmam*. The poets of the Tamil tradition of a later age claim a unique greatness for this Caṅkam theory of Love. Tiṇaimālainūṛṛaimpatu according to an old verse was composed for beautifying this theory of love so that the hatred of those who oppose that theory may be appeased. There is a much more direct attack on this opposition hinted in Paripāṭal where the Tamilian conception of Love is contrasted with the theory of marriage as contemplated by the Vedic scholars. The main attack is concentrated on showing that the later

life is not based on real Love. Tiruvalluvar knows nothing of such an opposition. Even if he had known such an opposition, he has purified the conception so much that no opponent can raise any valid objection to his theory of Love. It is because of this that Jain works like the commentary on Nīlakēci claim Tirukkuraḷ as a Jain authority.

Therefore, in the age of Tiruvalluvar *kāmam* was idealised. *Kāmam* has been equated with Love and not with mere physical pleasures or lust. Maṇakkuṭavar at first interprets *kāmam* as *aṇpu*, though to satisfy the other view, he hastens to add it may mean also 'physical union.' It is the emphasis on Love even in the life of physical pleasures that is important in Tirukkuraḷ. It is not mere physical pleasure, but the elevating human love which is experienced through the five senses, that is *kāmam*. It is therefore different from other material pleasures. As already stated, there is achieved here a spiritual and ethical grandeur. There is nothing demeaning in this *kāmam* which as it were deifies matter, mind and soul. One need not be ashamed of this *kāmam* having its root in physical pleasures. One need not be apologetic and explain that *kāmam* is only an aesthetic experience. Such an interpretation will not bring out the beautiful integration of the physical, mental, moral and spiritual personality of man - an integration - which is emphasised in his own unique way by Tiruvalluvar. Dr. Graul and Dr. Pope at first were misled by the name of *kāmattu-p-pāl* because in the later age the word *kāmam* has become a synonym for lust. But when they were persuaded to read a portion of this *kāmattu-p-pāl*, they

at once realised, the unique greatness of this theory of Love which Valluvar describes from the highest pedestal ever reached by human perfection. One should, therefore, do nothing to disturb this unique greatness—a greatness which Schweitzer explains as the unique glory of the world-affirming philosophy of Kuṛaḷ.

*Kāmam* is not *inṭam*. *Inṭam* is the final effect aimed at. But all pleasures cannot be glorified as revealing human perfection. That is why the ancient Tamilians use the term *aṇṭin aintiṇai*, “the five-fold human conduct of Love” emphasising the fundamental basis of Love which alone can glorify any happiness. The Tamilians equated this word *kāmam* with *aṇṭu* in such places like *kāma-k-kūṭṭam*. As contrasted with *aṇṭu* which is much more general, *kāmam* means the love which the lovers feel towards each other. Tiruvaḷḷuvar uses the phrase *kāmattiṟku inṭam* which differentiates between *kāmam* and *inṭam* as cause and effect. Love becomes a bliss in the right kind of sulky mood. Therefore to take *kāmam* as a synonym of *inṭam* is to miss the contribution of Valluvar, in aiming at a complete integration of all the aspects of human life. It is because of this, the phrase *inṭa aṇṭu*, “*aṇṭu* or Love which is Bliss” becomes so important even in the spiritual sphere as is evidenced by the use of the term by Cēkkiḷār in describing the final prayer of Kāraikkālammaiṃyār.

3.8

It will be thus clear that Tiruvaḷḷuvar is nearer the Caṅkam tradition. There is another important aspect of Tirukkuṛaḷ which conclusively proves this standpoint. Caṅkam poetry has no narrative verse. It

consists of dramatic monologues capturing the poetic moment in beautiful phrases of lightning flashes revealing the varied aspects of human love, either from the intrinsic or from extrinsic point of view. *Kāmattu-p-pāl* similarly consists only of dramatic monologues; there is no dramatic narration of any story. Therefore, according to that Caṅkam tradition, *Kāmattu-p-pāl* was divided under three headings. The first seven chapters consist of the dramatic monologues of Man. The next twelve chapters form the monologues of Woman. The remaining seven form the monologues of both the Man and the Woman. This is the division which is explained in a verse in *Tiruvalluvamālai* attributed to *Mōcikīraṇār*. *Kāḷiṅkar*'s commentary seems to follow this division as is made clear by his introduction to the chapter on *Pirivāṇṇāmai*, "inability to bear separation." Even the other commentators point out by specifying the speaker under each one of the two hundred and fifty verses. This is enough to show that *Tiruvalluvar* is following the Caṅkam tradition and not any other tradition, though here again he has made his unique contribution in having his chapters forming the rungs of his ladder of love.

### 3.9

We have already referred to the theory that *Tiruvalluvar* owes his inspiration to *Vātsyāyana*. But as has been hinted even *Paripperumāl* admits that *Tirukkuraḷ* can be explained in terms of the Tamil tradition itself. *Vātsyāyana* writes a science on physical pleasures of lust. One has only to compare the headings of *Vātsyāyana*'s works with the headings in

*Kāmattu-p-pāl*. *Kāmam* is not merely love according to Vātsyāyana. It is the pleasure of physical union even though love may be absent; and according to Vātsyāyana and others the woman embraced may be a virgin, a prostitute or a wife of another man. They are interested in stating facts without bringing in any question of values. But Tiruvalluvar is interested in describing the ideal. He has condemned the hankering after another man's wife as something which goes against *Dharma* and social well-being. It may give pleasure but he will never condescend to call it *kāmam*. He has condemned the institution of prostitutes in his theory of State and Society. The embrace of a prostitute is the embrace of a corpse according to him; for there is no living inspiration of love. As Paripperumāḷ has himself pointed out, Tiruvalluvar is interested in describing the idealised embrace of love based on *Dharma* and working for the social well-being. It is therefore to miss the very life of Tirukkuṟaḷ, if one were to identify Vātsyāyana's scientific approach with the normative approach of Tiruvalluvar. This is not to minimise the greatness of Vātsyāyana's contributions, but it is to emphasise the unique greatness of Tirukkuṟaḷ even as a *kāmasāstra*. Valluvar is concerned with values and not with physical facts. This is not to deny that Valluvar might have had knowledge of the Sanskrit *kāmasūtras* and *kāmasāstras* even if we assume that Vātsyāyana was not earlier than Valluvar; for the study of *kāmasūtras* can be assigned to a pre-Christian era. Nor is this to condemn Valluvar as an idealist, losing touch with realities of the worldly life. The very fact that like the psychoanalysts, Valluvar has

seen the force of love and has made it therefore the foundation of his philosophy shows how practical he is, in spite of his concern for values and the ideal.

### 3.10

Whilst the psychoanalysts emphasise the unconscious, Tiruvalluvar helps one to reach the super-conscious, through sex. The definition of *anpu* is a relationship in which the persons do not love their own personalities at the expense of others which will be *ācai*, but give freely to others. “*Uriyar piṛarkku*” “they belong to others” reminds us of the Greek and Christian conception of *Philia* as contrasted with Ego-centred *eros* and God-centred *agape*.

D’Arcy explains a conception of sex and love which makes Tiruvalluvar’s theory much more lucid. “The culmination of all true love even in human experience is not only complete absence of the consciousness of self but the realisation of the universal in and through our particular passion. The closer one looks at the various manifestations of human love the more one is conscious of a congruity between spiritual love and sex. These various manifestations are not haphazard ; they disclose a sequence as unified and progressive as a symphony of music by a great master. It is as if some presiding genius of the species were watching over the expression of love and regulating the human lottery.

“Sex proves to be the surest means of arousing and sustaining love. The permanence of the species is assured and at the same time the greatest variety

of the individual encouraged. The vital energies allow themselves to be transformed into something spiritual. What was begun in carnality ends in heaven. What seemed to be mere animal breeding partakes of spirituality and what appears at first to be just a bodily function acquires a value of its own above even that of knowledge. So it came about that the vital energies can be enlisted in the service of the soul and the highest spiritual experience await those who are faithful to the institution of Nature. The art of loving is not in the least what the libertine tradition would have us believe. It is rather the Science of making the fleeting loves of youth endure and multiply in fresh waves of experience throughout the course of loving human life. Love is no episode; it imposes itself like a divinely regulating inspiration and offering the promise of an undreamt of Perfection”.

#### 4. PORUṬPĀL

##### 4.1

*Poruṭpāl* is *arthasāstra*. *Dharma* has been described in terms of the individual developing his social and universal consciousness. As already explained the individual requires the proper environment not only in nature but also in society. In that way the science of society or government is intimately connected with *Dharma*. *Dharma* according to Tamilian conception of *vākai* is not only the discharge of the individual duties but also the duties of the status one occupies in the society. The latter are made clearer in *Poruṭpāl*. *Poruṭ* means wealth and the commentators explain that wealth is possible only in properly organised society; for otherwise might becomes the right instead of the right coming the might,

Here also the Pan-Indian conception should be emphasised for understanding and appreciating the contributions of Tiruvalluvar. The theory of State and Society is described under several heads which are called *saptāṅga* or the seven limbs of state viz., the king, the ministry, the army, the finance, the fortification, the country or citizens and the allies. The Kuṛaḷ “*paṭai kuṭi kūl amaiccu naṭpu araṇ ārum uṭaiyān aracarul ēru-*” (381) “he is the lion amongst the Kings who is the Lord of all the six viz., Army, Citizens, Finance, Ministry, Allies, Fortifications” accepts this theory as the basis.

#### 4.2

The king is called *Swāmin*, which Valluvar translates as “*uṭaiyān*”. But even here there is a distinction. He gives the pre-eminent place to the king or the sovereign to whom all the other six become limbs thus bringing out the full force of the term *Swāmin*. The king therefore is not considered as a mere limb of the state. This is made clear by Parimēlaḷakar who includes all the other six under *Aṅka-v-iyal*. In this way, the conception of sovereignty becomes clearer. Often Tiruvalluvar uses the abstract terms like *vēntu* and *aracu* which still further emphasise this point of view in the eyes of the modern reader. The term *iṟai* is significant because it connotes a power all pervasive in the State. Valluvar also calls it *olī* (light) which reigns even when the king sleeps. It is the *Dharma* of the government or society whose concrete representation is looked upon as the king. It is the old theory of the Caṅkam age which sings, “Food is not the life nor the water; the great expanse of the

world has for its life only the king.” This may suggest the divine right of the king. But what is emphasised is rather the duties of the king than his rights. He is the custodian of *Dharma*; he is fearless and full of unsullied military honour; he is wise and educated; he is firm; he is never negligent, always bubbling up with enthusiasm. In all these ways he removes *Adharma* from his kingdom. He has no likes and dislikes of his own. He is easier of access to his citizens. He knows no harsh words. He is full of sweet words; he is munificent and thus gives gracefully, though ruling firmly. He welcomes good advice even when it is personally bitter. He is just and upright; he is full of mercy; he exists for protecting the citizens and the State. He develops the resources of his kingdom, through production and thus amasses wealth protecting it and distributes it justly. Therefore this king is not only the Lord of Justice but also the great expert in the economics of the common weal; he is full of ideals, personal greatness and popularity. Therefore the king is the ideal man from the social point of view which emphasises all the six limbs of the State.

#### 4.2

The characteristic features enumerated are important as being supremely human. Here one notices the distinction between Tiruvalluvar's approach and the approach of the other authorities on *arthasāstra*. Others explain and discuss the various aspects of society and government in terms of statecraft and diplomacy. They have the values of their own. But

Valluvar's approach is much more fundamental. He discusses all the intricate problems of the State and Society from the basic and common human point of view. In describing the qualifications and attainments of a king, others discuss what kind of education is necessary for a king. Is it economics or law or military science? But Valluvar does not enter into any such discussion. He never forgets that the king or for that matter any officer of State is a human being. Man differs from beast because of education which opens the eyes that can read through and understand the force of symbols. There is joy in the company of the learned. Education makes the hidden knowledge within man to well forth like the water from a spring. The learned become the citizens of the universe; and man therefore becomes greater and greater through this life-long process of education. It is not mere acquisition of knowledge that is education, however thorough it may be. Real education consists in living what has been learnt so as to be a standing example to others. It is then that he becomes the universal man realising that others also enjoy in the intellectual world what he himself enjoys. Valluvar once again emphasises this important, fundamental human education from the negative point of view. Physical beauty without this life-giving education is nothing more than well-decked puppet of clay. In the absence of universal consciousness intended by universal education, good fortune itself becomes much more harmful to the world. Noble birth itself becomes futile in the absence of education.

## 4.2.2

In the absence of education one may be well informed; nothing is more life-giving than the feast offered by the great who expound to the ear, a feast sweeter than ambrosia. The words of the great are like a walking-stick to those treading on slippery grounds. It is the subtler intelligence and deeper insight which find expression in the real humility of the speech of the great.

## 4.2.3

This kind of training leads to the development of the real wisdom which becomes the greatest fortress. Here again Valluvar describes wisdom not in terms of the king but in terms of all human beings. If all these are necessary for an ordinary man, how much more are they indispensable to a king. That is the way he looks at these great political problems. Wisdom is no slave of the roaming mind. It withdraws from evil. That which directs towards good is real wisdom. Whatever be said and by whomsoever, wisdom is democratic enough to discern the truth therein. The wise man is no pedant. He makes the most subtle ideas clearer to the common man. The wise man identifies this with world and society; for that is the greatness of wisdom. He reads correctly the future. How can such a man be disappointed? He is fearless but shudders at things to be feared morally. Wisdom is therefore the greatest of wealth. One who has achieved this perfection of knowledge and wisdom knows how to behave in a State; state-craft is crystal clear to his discerning and loving mind. He always takes the tried counsel of the great

and he is never lured by deceptive profit. The great always judge aright the strength of the enemy and their own strength, their limitations of force and wealth; theirs is the path of the golden mean; they know the proper time for action and also the proper place therefor. When they want, the service, wisdom and knowledge of others help them to choose aright those who care for the State and Society rather than who care for individual salvation, religious fanaticism, individual aggrandisement or individual pleading as against the Social Welfare. Within the context of *Tirukkuraḷ upādha* should be interpreted in this way and not in a Machiavellian sense. The great do not seek the impossible. There is no man who is flawless and therefore amidst the faults and merits they choose one with the greater merit, on the basis of the other's action which is one's own greatness especially when the other has experienced the responsibility of social and family life. They choose only after deep consideration and thereafter they are no more in any doubt; they are men of action and not mere theorists; they manage the affairs, improve the resources, increase the wealth and scrutinise all the obstacles to progress. One must know who can accomplish and what; and then one should entrust that duty to him. Man should be ever watchful over the actions of his subordinates.

#### 4.2.4

In all these ways the practical knowledge and wisdom, education and experience prove useful to man in general in all walks of life and therefore they are equally applicable to the king, in whom these general principles have to be interpreted so as to suit his needs and duties, his rights and privileges.

## 4 2.5

Valluvar speaks of the king; and in his age monarchy must have been the rule. But because the author is emphasising the fundamental human ideals, his chapters though intended for monarchy are found suitable much more than anything else, to democracy which emphasises the basic human virtues and therefore the equality of men. Valluvar might not have contemplated a democracy but his basic human approach makes his work best fitted for democracy and democratic government.

## 4.2.51

Man possesses not only knowledge and activity but also a heart. All these three faculties in him have to avoid the evil tendencies, pride, anger, lust, parsimony, a false sense of honour, a futile joy, neglect of duty and self-conceit. One must guard against these weaknesses ever so small they be. One must realise one's own faults before one finds faults in others.

## 4.2.52

In this sphere of political development, the company of the great who are virtuous and wise and who guard others from present and future evil is the greatest help. In their absence, one hastens to his fall. "Water alters and takes the character of the soil through which it flows even so the mind takes up the colour of the company with which it consorts." The greatness of the mind is really the greatness of the company it keeps. Therefore the evil company should be avoided. Tiruvalluvar is never satisfied merely with good results,

According to him the action which leads to the result should be pure. Purity of action and purity of mind depend upon the purity of association.

4.2.53

Tiruvalluvar never forgets the heart. Some authorities on *arthasāstra* will look upon even sons as dangers. But Valluvar, as pointed out by Pariti believes in the efficacy of old attachment remaining with unchanging love even in adversity. Valluvar points out to the crow which shares its prey without concealing it. A sweet tongue and a liberal hand with absence of anger, gather kinsmen all around.

4.2.54

Even when rendering justice, one must be equitable and merciful. *Kaṇṇōṭṭam* is grace or considerateness. It is not restricted as Parimēlaḷakar will have it to those who are already known to one. Paritīyār will translate it as *kirupai*. “They that of eyes which are not moved to graciousness are like trees that are rooted at the soil.” But this does not affect one’s discharge of duty. This *kaṇṇōṭṭam* is praised as *nākarikam* in Naṇṇai and this precious conception is accepted by Valluvar. “Those who desire to be styled the very pink of courtesy will drink off even the poison, that has been mixed for them before their own eyes”.

4.2.55

To render justice in an upright way to a friend and foe alike or punish the evil-doers for protecting the citizens is no blame ; that kind of justice is inspired by

a loving heart rushing to help the society, however unpalatable that duty may be. It is like rooting out the weeds to help the crops. It is this justice and righteous punishment that make the society rich and contented. One should not, therefore, ever be negligent in the discharge of social duty.

#### 4.2.56

But one must remember that this power of judgement and punishment should not be misused. A tyrant is a murderer. The tears of groaning citizens wear away the tyrant's prosperity. Therefore the king must be full of compassion. The country becomes a desert and people become uncivilised when the ruler is a tyrant.

#### 4.2.57

Even when one inflicts a righteous punishment, it should not be frightful; it should be proportionate to the wrong committed. Though reverence for the personality of the criminal demands proportionate punishment, the aim of punishment should be to deter one from continuing a crime. But this can be satisfied if the punishment seems to be excessive though not so in reality, which is all that is necessary for the punishment being deterrent. Therefore in Tiruvalluvar's theory of punishment the principles of equality, reformation and prevention are emphasised. It is ultimately governed by love and sweet words. A frightful punishment engendered by an angry mood affects the prosperity of the State.

#### 4.2.6

The necessity for watchfulness and the avoidance of negligence have already been emphasised. The Tamil

State of those times had a system of spies. It is necessary even in the interest of justice to know the truth about all people—the relatives, the enemies and the employees of the king. A spy is successful when he inspires no suspicion, and therefore he should not be honoured publicly. The spy should not merely remain in doubt. Even the spy has to be spied and the king tests one spy by another spy and finally acts only when three spies, unknown to each other, agree in making a statement. Valluvar here makes the systems of spies justifiable because the spies form the very eye of the king.

#### 4.2.7

The king is devoted to and enthusiastic in the performance of his duties. The enthusiasm is real wealth. One is great in proportion to devotion to work. The joy of munificence is denied to those who are not inspired by this devotion. Laziness is its negative aspect. It destroys the whole family. Procrastination, forgetfulness, languor and sleep are the four festive boats that tempt and lead the ill-fated to destruction. Therefore Valluvar emphasises as a precious possession the ceaseless effort and perseverance. There is nothing impossible to perseverance. The glory of social benevolence abides in ceaseless effort. Such a man does not hanker after pleasure but lusts for work. Perseverance by-passes fate itself. In that path of perseverance man stands undaunted by opposition and failure. He laughs at misfortunes; and flood-like sorrows vanish away before such a wise man. He finds pleasure in pain, for he considers misery to be natural to man.

This portrait of a king is really a portrait of an ideal man, full of wisdom, full of heroism, full of munificence, always inspired by the high ideals of love and justice. Valluvar has followed other authorities. He has probably adopted the conception of *upātai* and espionage. But Valluvar's State is the State of love, kinship, compassion and justice, all of which increase the wealth, prosperity and peace of the society. It is not a world of mutual suspicion. The importance of *kaṇṇōṭṭam*, 'considerateness' and *cuṟṟam taḷāal*, "bringing within one's kind hold his relatives" cannot be exaggerated. Here arises the importance of a study of Kauṭilya for comparison. The emphasis on purity of action is something unique in Valluvar. We must also emphasise his theory of punishment which seems to be almost modern, inspired by love and human consideration, though he does not go to the extent of looking upon criminals as suffering from disease as some of the modern criminologists do. The emphasis on *veḷāṇmai* and munificence which were emphasised in *aṟam* should lead us to see the interconnection between *aṟam* and *poruḷ*. *Aṟam* is the very basis of *poruḷ* as well. As we shall see presently *poruḷ* is intended only as a suitable environment for the perpetuation of *Dharma*.

### 4.3

#### 4.3.1

The six limbs of the State, according to Parimēlaḷakar, are discussed in thirtytwo chapters.

Of these the first ten deal with the ministers. The picture of the ideal man will certainly apply to all officers of State and to citizens. A minister is great for the choice of means, season and action and is skilled in the execution of rare enterprises. He is undaunted in his resoluteness. He is ever bent upon protecting the subjects. He is a learned man and has great perseverance. He is a great diplomat in international politics bringing about union and disunion in that field as he likes. His comprehension of the situation is faultless. He performs the proper action through such comprehension in the best manner possible, and his advice is always the best. Yet with all this he never swerves from *Dharma*. His words are full of weight; he knows the world of books. He has a subtle intuitive knowledge and he understands fully well the current waves of the world. He is fearless in giving his advice.

#### 4.3.2

In the description of the ministers who include ambassadors, Valluvar emphasises the importance of oratory or speech. Probably it was a society which relied on learned assemblies and councils, in local and central governments. There is a chapter on *colvaṇmai*, "the power of speech", another on *avai-y-aṛital*, "understanding the audience" and a third on *avai-y-añcāmai*, "one's fearlessness of the audience." These are worthy of study by members of assemblies of the modern world as emphasising higher ideals whilst at the same time giving us practical hints. The chapter on *tūtu* or ambassador also emphasises the powers of speech in addition to loving nature, high birth, manners that captivate princes, knowledge of politics, scholarship, personality, natural wisdom, fearlessness and understanding of the right time and place.

## 4.3.21

It is important to note that Tiruvalluvar here insists on *tūymai* or purity even in the diplomacy of the ambassador along with boldness or fearlessness and truthfulness. The ambassador should also be capable of winning the support of foreign ministers. Friendship, truthfulness, fearlessness and purity are, as already seen, the marks of a man of *Dharma*. Therefore the diplomacy that Valluvar contemplates, is a *Dharmic* one.

## 4.3.3

There are certain advices given in the chapters on *mannarai-c-cērntolukal*, "behaviour of one attached to the king" and on *kuṟippaṟital*, "comprehending the mind or the idea of the king" which are important for even the modern government servant. "Avoid all graver feelings so as to avoid suspicion. Do not covet things desired by the superior. Be neither too near nor too far from your superior. Avoid whispered words and interchange of smiles in his presence. Be not inquisitive to know his disposition. Seek the right time and suggest the desirable in a pleasing manner. Honour his splendour. Even with friends, avoid unseemly things. Read the mind without any doubt in the face—especially in the eye which reflects the mind whether in anger or joy." These valuable advices are enough to prove Valluvar's deeper concern with the practical world.

## 4.3.4

The ministers form the executive body of the State. There are various ways of executing a policy or an act. "Decide and then act without delay.

Delay where you must; but delay not where you should not. Act in all ways and that in a feasible way changing the means if need be. But do not leave any act unfinished. Act without any clouded thought on your resources, the means, the opportune time, place and action, only after considering the aim, the obstacles and the ultimate gain. The best way to perform an act begun is to know its secret, from one who knows it. Undertake an act which will in turn accomplish another, like making one rutting elephant capture another. Alliance of one's foes may be better than doing a good turn to the friends. The chances of reconciliation with superior foes should be welcomed." These advices therefore cover both the internal and external policy. The means and ends should be both weighed in the cause of peace and success.

#### 4.3.41

What is important in all these matters of action is firmness in action which is really the firmness of mind. This alone leads to all glory. "For the firm in mind achieve all that they design. Avoid failures; but once an act is undertaken do not be foiled by obstacle. Do not proclaim an act except by successfully terminating it; for, speech is easy whilst action is difficult. Resolve and then waver not in acting with vigour what will yield pleasure and profit in the end, even if falsity and troubles beset you to start with. The world welcomes none but those who are firm in action".

#### 4.3.42

This firmness had been emphasised by all authorities on *arthaśāstra*. Living as we do in the Gandhian India,

what is much more interesting and significant in Tiruvalluvar is that for him the means must be as pure and desirable as the end itself. The end will not justify the means in his theory. That is the great message of his chapter on *Vinai-t-tūymai*, “the purity of action.”

The means should be pure in the sense of being in accordance with *Dharma* and of winning fame of the right type. “Avoid” therefore he says, “actions which bring neither good nor fame. If you care to be glorious, avoid things that may tarnish your good name. Good allies bring prosperity; but good actions yield everything desired, even if you suffer. Resist from mean things. Never do any act for which you will repent thereafter. The pinching poverty is preferred by the great to the disreputable wealth. Wealth achieved by making others shed tears vanish, making the winner shed tears in return. But good actions causing no injury to others except to oneself ultimately prove a blessing in disguise. Therefore success through forbidden deeds causes but ultimate sorrow. To lay by wealth through deceit and evil means, is to preserve water in a pot of clay that is not baked.” Valluvar makes it clear further that the end does not justify the means. “Even for appeasing the hunger of your mother do not perform anything condemned by the great.” This is certainly not in accordance with *Āpad Dharma* preached by *Bhīṣmācārya* on his death bed to the *dharmic Pāṇḍavas*. It is clear that Valluvar goes against this kind of thought. Even if it were to be shown that this is not his original contribution, his work is unique in having chosen this theory of purity of action as against *Āpad-Dharma*.

## 4.4

Finance is the mainspring of all actions in a state and society. Valluvar realises that wealth makes even worthless things full of worldly value, so much so the poor are despised and the wealthy are honoured irrespective of their other solid virtues. Wealth is an unfailing lamp reaching all dark corners and dispelling all enmity. Therefore one should amass wealth ; for, then only any undertaking removed from all dangers becomes romantic, even as one joyfully witnesses the elephant-fight when safe on a distant hill. Wealth is the steel that saws through the pride of your enemies. Once wealth is achieved, *poruḷ* and *kāmam* become an easy gain. Therefore the king enriches his treasury through escheat, through tax and through tributes from enemies' lands. This is indeed worldly wisdom.

## 4.41

But the *dharmic* Valluvar will not be true to his name, if he does not insist on enriching treasury through virtuous means. Only that wealth amassed through a conscious pursuit of virtuous means and without foul practices will beget *Dharma* and *Kāma*. That is the significance of the phrase—“*poruḷ ennum poyyā viḷakkam*”, ‘wealth which is the light of truth.’ “Touch not the wealth that is not gathered through compassion and love.” It is in that world of higher values that compassion which is the child of love is reared by the cherishing nurse of wealth. It is thus clear that Valluvar emphasises the purity of the means of attaining wealth, a purity which is at once *Dharma* and Love.

## 4.5

Vaḷḷuvar agrees with other authorities on *arthaśāstra* that ultimately force is the basis of sovereignty when internal peace and external freedom are in danger. Therefore it is the chief wealth of the king. Army is an ancient institution with a long tradition which alone remains undaunted even when repulsed, and which rushes against even the Lord of Death, with a boldness, military pride, traditional chivalry and trustworthiness. The army thus protects peace and prosperity, both within and without, by its supreme self-sacrifice in the cause of the culture represented by the State or Sovereign.

## 4.51

After singing the glories of the army, Vaḷḷuvar gives us a glimpse of the justifiable pride of a heroic army. In the best tradition of Caṅkam literature here also we get the dramatic monologues. This suggests a thought that perhaps the whole of the Kuṟaḷ can be looked upon as a series of monologues, but the difficulty is that it is not possible for us at this distant time to imagine the proper context for each of the Kuṟaḷ as a dramatic monologue.

## 4.52

The warriors aim at unique greatness. It is glorious, even if you miss, to aim at an elephant rather than at hare even if you succeed. *pēr-āṇmai* 'glorious valour', is really *ūr-āṇmai*, 'the generosity to the country' when some danger threatens it. This explains

that what appears to be man-slaughter on the battle-field is nothing but the expression of the supreme sacrifice of love in the cause of an ideal society, *ūrāṇmai*. This is also the meaning of the Kuṛaḷ ‘*aṛattiṛkē anṇu cārpēṇpa aṛiyār maṛattiṛkum ahtē tuṇai*’ — “they say that love is the basis of *Dharma* alone. They do not know it is equally the basis of heroism.” The commentators, however, have interpreted *ūrāṇmai* in different ways either as generosity to the fallen or as refusing to wield the sword against the weak or as crushing down the enemy’s onslaught. Unfortunately these interpretations do not bring out the *dharmic* aspect of the army inspired by love. Even if the king were to prohibit, the real warrior will not desist from his duty. Even at the moment of death the warrior enjoys the opportunity of his doing his mite for the great cause. “The heroic death on the battle-field is so precious that one may pray for it as the greatest boon ; for it brings tears in the eyes of all those who have protected him ; for he dies for them all ”

#### 4.6

Valluvar passes on to consider international relationship under the term *naṭpu* which, as the commentators point out, he discusses from its positive and negative aspects.

##### 4.6.1

In the treatment of this intricate problem of diplomacy, he shows his greatness which arises again from his basic human approach. If universal love

should be a permanent achievement for all, international fellowship should be achieved in all the States of the world coming to live as a family of friendly States. Looked at thus, what has to be aimed at is nothing more than what every human being knows as friendship in his worldly relationship with others. Therefore though Valluvar discusses international fellowship, the chapters seem to suggest, because of this fundamental approach, that he, as it is were, dealing with the individual friendship of men. The value of this approach in making the abstruse diplomacy clear to and understandable by the ordinary man in the street cannot be easily exaggerated. It is only when the common man understands and appreciates the necessity for international fellowship that it can be really established in this world.

#### 4.6.2

“ True friendship hastens to relieve the distress as readily as the hand of the man whose garment has slipped away. ” This is a truth any man will appreciate. Valluvar enriches this conception by his own experience. “ Like the beauty of a book revealing newer depths and pleasures every time it is studied anew ; friendship reveals unexpected depths and sweet aspects at every new contact. ” It is not contact which is necessary in international fellowship, for instance; it is the identity of feelings which alone creates the right to friendship. Such a friendship grows day after day like that of the waxing crescent moon. The *dharmic* aspect is emphasised when Valluvar asserts that friendship is not for pleasant

contact, but for harsh advice when one swerves from the path of virtue; "Reflect before you decide on friendship. The old allies have a sweetness of their own, especially when there is an identity of feeling, welcoming even their offences towards them. But the friendship of selfish men has an eye only on profit. It never helps one; so is the intimacy of the fools. Bitter indeed is the relation of those who say one thing in private and another in public and who do something else in action. There is also the outward friendship without any inner contact; they are the dissemblers with a smile on their face but a hatred within their heart. The folded hands of such an enemy, even in an attitude of devotion, may conceal a weapon".

#### 4.6.3

There are twelve chapters which Maṇakkuṭavar and Paripperumāl will classify as *tunpa-v-iyal* or that part which deals with the sorrows of the State. But Parimēlaḷakar rightly includes them all under *naṭpu*. He feels it is the negative aspect to *naṭpu* which is enmity that is emphasised according to the Pan-Indian theory of State. *Tunpa-v-iyal* according to him has no separate place. International fellowship may be affected by the individual faults of the statesmen or kings. Therefore these faults have to be looked upon as the internal enemies within one's own mind.

According to Paripperumāl, the first eight chapters herein relate to dangers which arise because of others; the last five chapters describe the miseries caused by one's own acts and tendencies. Parimēlaḷakar relies upon the three basic defects in man viz., ignorance, attachment and hatred. Foolishness and what is

more intolerable, the fool's pretention of wisdom arise because of ignorance. 1. Malice, 2. inciting hatred, 3. the various aspects of enmity, 4. internal enmity and 5. the misbehaviour towards the great are the five evils flowing from hatred. 1. Being a hen-pecked husband, 2. living with prostitutes, 3. intoxication, 4. gambling and 5. disease which can be cured only by medicine, arise from one's attachments to desires.

#### 4.6.31

Foolishness binds the harmful and loses the good ; it aspires for the forbidden or the impossible. The fool may be great but does not govern himself. He does not know good conduct and ultimately gets himself fettered. Shamelessness, indifference (to right and wrong), callousness and aversion (from what is desirable) - these are the marks of a fool.

#### 4.6.32

“The fool, proud of his wisdom is a greater danger. Foolishness is the greatest poverty. The real nakedness of foolishness is not covered by that fool who covers only the nakedness of his body. He knows nothing wise and he does not follow other's advice. He is a plague unto himself till death. Wisdom feels its identity with the world, but foolishness is the evil spirit which goes against the world.” It will be thus seen that Valluvar does not forget the emphasis on universal consciousness.

## 4.6.4

Malice fosters the evil of disunion among all creatures. It is the greatest disease. Fame comes in only when it is cured. It is the misery of miseries. Hatred leads to all miseries; and friendship leads to all that is good.

## 4.6.41

Next come the innate tendencies and activities which multiply enmities, when there is no love, when there is no friendship, when there is no enjoyment, when there is nothing but fear, ignorance, miserliness and disagreement with others. A man then is full of anger. He keeps no secrets; he does not care for infamy; he has no good qualities; his excessiveness in lust is very marked. Such a one is an easy prey to his enemies. "His enmity is surely to be purchased even at some cost"—so think the politicians.

## 4.6.42

Next follow the varieties of enmity incited and developed. Even in jest, enmity should not be desired. Never incur the hatred of those whose ploughs are words. He is mad who creates many enemies whilst the world abides in him who turns hatred into friendship.

## 4.6.43

Then there is the concealed enmity which pretends to be friendship till the opportunity comes in for attack. "Avoid this secret enmity arising among the kindred,

After this secret enmity, there can be no reunion. The association with such enemies is like living with a cobra ”

4.6.44

The greatest hatred kindled results from insulting the Great-great in power, physical and material. To incite them to hatred is like beckoning the God of Death. One can escape fire but not the hatred of the Great.

4.6.5

To follow the advice of a wise wife is different from becoming a slave to her lust. What she cannot do openly she gets it done through her hen-pecked husband who is indeed a great shame to society. He is afraid of doing any good deed. The modest woman herself is more dignified than the manliness of him who is slave to her lust. There is no *Dharma*, *Artha*, or *Kāma* for him.

4.6.51

An attachment to a prostitute is much worse for what she desires is not love but money. Her embrace is an embrace of an unknown corpse. Those who seek universal love will not fall a prey to the worthless charms of harlots.

4.6.52

“ Intoxication makes one mean enough even in the eyes of one’s own mother. What foolishness that one should purchase unconsciousness thus ! Those who drink liquor drink but poison ”

## 4.6.53

Gambling is another great evil inspired by desire. The gain from gambling is the baited iron-hook which the fish swallows. Gambling leads to misery and destroys all reputation.

## 4.6.54

Diseases cripple a man. Gluttony is the greatest evil. Eat only when you feel hungry and even then not in excess. Moderation here as elsewhere is the greatest virtue. Otherwise man becomes a prey to infinite diseases. How can social virtues thrive; how can social duties be performed when one cannot be himself healthy?

## 4.6.6

In all these ways the social duties require certain individual restraint and perfection. Here again one sees the intimate connection between *Dharma* and *Artha*. It is significant that this individual perfection is emphasised under the topic of international relationship. Here again it will be seen that Valluvar's approach is from the ordinary human point of view. The ordinary man has to guard himself against these evils. How much more is the necessity on the part of the leader of a state, for warding off these dangers!

## 4.7

## 4.7.1

The theory of the State is that its sovereignty resides in the Head of the State who is an ideal man;

he relies upon the Executive council of ministers full of *dharma*, knowledge and executive control. The sovereignty ultimately depends on the force of an army for keeping the peace within and from defending the country from others. The State builds up its treasury for the sake of culture, state and society. It occupies a specified and well-defined geographical region, well-fortified in peace and war. The state is full of worthy citizens. It remains in international relationship with the other States of world.

4.7.11.

We have discussed all the limbs of the State except (1) *araṇ* or fortification and (2) *kuṭi*. In the *ārthaśāstras* sometimes the geographical region is emphasised and sometimes the citizens who occupy that geographical area are emphasised. There is a chapter called *nāṭu* in Tirukkuṟaḷ and the commentators have interpreted this to refer to one of the six limbs. According to some of them, *nāṭu* has to be equated with *kuṭi*. But unfortunately some of the commentators like Maṇakkuṭavar themselves refer to the thirteen concluding chapters in *poruṭpāl* as *kuṭi-y-iyal*. In the opening verse, Tiruvalluvar speaks of *kuṭi* and not of *nāṭu* and therefore *kuṭi-y-iyal* must deal with *kuṭi*. There is the older tradition preserved in Tiruvalluva mālai where the verse 26 attributed to Pōkkiyār gives the following arrangement of *poruṭpāl*. First twentyfive chapters deal with the King; next ten with the ministry; next two deal with fortification; the next one chapter deals with finance; the succeeding two with army; the next seventeen with *naṭpu* or international relationship; and the

last thirteen with *kuṭi*. According to this tradition. the last thirteen chapters deal with *kuṭi* or citizens. Again, according to this tradition, both the chapters on *nāṭu* and *araṇ* deal with fortification. This is very significant. Kāṭiṅkar also follows this tradition. He interprets *nāṭu* 'the country' as *nāṭṭaraṇ*, 'the fortification of the country' and *araṇ* as the fortified city. A contented and prosperous country is the best fortified place.

#### 4.7.12

We have seen the conception of the limbs of State. Valluvar speaks of the limbs of a country viz., the flowing rivers, the rich mountains, the rain-fed reservoirs and strong forts. He also speaks of the five beauties of a country viz., wealth, natural yield, happiness, safety and absence of disease. Nature, Capital and Labour are there and the people believe in just distribution after production and accumulation of wealth. The country is free from faction, internal enemies and civil war. There is no chronic hunger, incurable disease or ravaging enemy. All these emphasise that peace and prosperity are the greatest fortification for an extensive country.

#### 4.7.2

But within this geographical boundary we have fortified places, which are the cities. It is this kind of fortification apart from the fortification of peace and culture that is discussed in the chapter on *araṇ*. A fortress is an offensive and defensive

contrivance. It is full of waters, mountains, forest and a fortification of earth. The fortification has height, thickness, solidity and impregnability. It has an extensive space but the places to be guarded are small. It cannot easily be attacked. It is full of food; it is easy to defend. It has everything within it. Above all it has the warrior to defend in times of need. It cannot be overthrown either by a regular siege or by storm or by treachery.

### 4.7.3

Here are two important things to be noted. The first one is that Valluvar speaks of prosperity and peace of the country as a great fortification. This is a truth whose importance is being slowly realised in modern times. The second is that its description of actual fortification is not as detailed as in other *arthaśāstras* like *Sukranīti*. That reveals to us another characteristic feature of Tirukkuṟaḷ. He emphasises only the basic principles. But one cannot build a fort with the help of Tirukkuṟaḷ. For that, we must go to practical hand-books on fortification. This is true of all aspects of statecraft discussed by Tiruvalluvar. Nobody can with the help of Tirukkuṟaḷ alone govern a State or levy a number of taxes or organise a secretariat or an army in the practical world. For that we require in addition the Board, Standing orders, the criminal and the civil Codes and numerous Manuals with detailed rules and regulations. Some of these rules and regulations are found in works like Kauṭilya's, *Arthaśāstra*, *Sukranīti* and *Manu Dharma Śāstra*. They are in that way of greater practical importance than Valluvar. But unfortunately their practical instructions and

details are no longer valid. They have become antiquated. That is why Tiruvaḷḷuvar refuses to deal with these ever-changing details. He concentrates himself on the unchanging realities of human nature and the eternal varieties of life which are eternal ideals. In this way what at first sight appears a defect, from the practical side, becomes Vaḷḷuvar's eternal glory. Here again it is the Pan-Indian background that suggests this unique greatness of Tiruvaḷḷuvar.

4.8

4.81

One may conclude this study with a discussion on the last part of *poruṭpāl*. Parimēlaḷakar has interpreted *kuṭi* as *nāṭu*. He has taken the chapter on *nāṭu* to refer to this limb of the State viz., *kuṭi*. For one thing Vaḷḷuvar uses the specific term *kuṭi* and not *nāṭu* in the opening Kuṟaḷ of *poruṭpāl*. Secondly all except Parimēlaḷakar call the last part *kuṭi-y-iyal*. Thirdly the old tradition preserved in Tiruvaḷḷuva mālai is very specific that this last part of the book deals with the limb of the state referred to as *kuṭi* in the opening Kuṟaḷ. Fourthly it has already been explained, according to the old tradition, that the chapter on *nāṭu* along with that on *araṇ* refer to a beautiful conception of fortification. If this is correct *kuṭi* remains to be explained only in this last part.

According to Parimēlaḷakar, however, there is nothing more to be explained and therefore he feels that last part is a miscellaneous one, where subjects not elsewhere dealt with are discussed. Apart from the fact that this kind of treatment is against all

tradition, it misses the great contribution of Valluvar. This last part of *poruṭpāl* according to tradition should be taken as dealing with *kuṭi*, the citizens who make up the State. This purpose of the State is fulfilled only when the citizens become perfect human beings. Because of the perfection spoken of here, Parimēlaḷakar is misled into thinking that this portion is miscellaneous in that it mentions the greatness of human beings, a greatness to be achieved by all the limbs of the State. Since all the limbs of the State from the basic point of view are human beings and citizens, there is no necessity for calling this part a miscellaneous section or *olīpiyal*.

In the modern conception especially in the democratic world, the State exists for the peoples' welfare, which is interpreted by Tiruvalluvar in the widest sense of the term as including the human perfection described in *aṟattu-p-pāl*. Taking it in this sense, *poruṭpāl* becomes subsidiary to *aṟattu-p-pāl* in that it creates the proper environment, social and material, for the achievement of such a perfection. All the other limbs of the State are the trustees, if we were to use a term Mahatma Gandhi has used for his purpose; and the citizens are the beneficiaries. Others exist for the sake of citizens for making the latter live a perfect human life. It is this conception of Tiruvalluvar which has suggested to Kampan the idea that the real soul or life of the State consists of the citizens whilst all other limbs of State represented by the king, as the concrete embodiment of sovereignty, form but the body which provides the means

and forms the source of all kinds of enjoyment for that life. The very fact that the citizens are described in terms of perfection at the end of *poruṭpāl* shows that the citizens form the crown and glory of the State. This is the greatest contribution Tiruvalluvar makes and it is unfortunate that Parimēlaḷakar's commentary misses the importance of this part of the book.

4.82

The first chapter in *kuṭi-y-i-yal* emphasises the high birth. It has no reference to any caste or community. In India, as in ancient China, family is the cradle for all human perfection. Mother's love and the responsibilities of the family instil in the mind of the child, the natural rectitude and abhorrence of evil action, correct conduct and truth, which make them all, always cheerful, liberal, ever speaking the pleasant words, without reviling anybody or indulging in deceit. The importance of family for the perfection of human being, whatever be the status one occupies in society, is thus brought out clearly and this has to be understood with reference to the family and love, described in *aṟattu-p-pāl* and *kāmattu-p-pāl*.

4.83

*Māṇam* refers here to a deeper conception of honour which consists in living up to the ideal and sacrificing one's life rather than the ideal, if ever there were a competition between the two. That is the glory and real heroism of the great citizens. They never dream of any disreputable act. That is their dignity even in great adversity; for, they know that men who fall from a high estate are like the lock of hair fallen

from the head. This is their great fame and they will never descend to follow those they despise, though they themselves are humble in their prosperity.

4.84

With this high conception of honour of living up to the ideal, they are great, always doing great and famous things. All men are born equal, but great acts make for real greatness. Even one who occupies a lowly state thus becomes great. A woman's chastity is in her hands and similarly one's greatness is in one's own hands. In spite of achieving the impossible, real greatness is modest whilst littleness is extremely proud. Such a great man is perfect in that he is full of all good human qualities. Because of the high sense of his duty these qualities become his second nature. The greatest good is the goodness of character which is full of love, benigance and truth, which abhors evil, and identifies itself with the society. Refraining from killing is the greatness of *tapas*; refraining from even mentioning other's false is the glory of human perfection. The great man willingly accepts defeat even at the hands of his inferiors. Therein lies the touchstone of perfection; for humility is the strength of the great which disarms any enemy. The ages may change but not perfection. The perfection reached reminds us of the saints described in *tuṣṭavaṇam*. It is the same perfection which is possible to be achieved in a welfare State. What is perfection worth if Man does not do good to even evil-doers?

4.85

This perfection is exhibited in his own behaviour which shows that one has become one with others. His

heart beats in unison with the hearts of others. He is easy of access and full of love, perfectly nurtured in a family of high reputation. It is not physical resemblance but the identity of human feeling that is found amongst the great people. They pour oil on disturbed waters, exhibiting their pleasing qualities even when others hate them. But for them, the harmony of this world would be buried in the dust. They brighten up the world with their smile, otherwise the world will be steeped in darkness.

4.86

The munificence of such a man has been already discussed, in the chapter on *oppuravu* in *aṟattu-p-pāl*. Its negative aspect is described in *nanṟiyil celvam* or the ungrateful wealth. The title itself is significant. Wealth is made possible by the whole society at large and the grateful citizens should share it with others in loving gratitude, for otherwise the selfish enjoyment of wealth is a mark of ingratitude. One who does not possess the human feeling or what Shakespeare calls 'the milk of human kindness' cannot feel one's own duties towards one's own body politic. He is no man but a demon, more dead than living, really poor though rich, verily a dog in the manger or like unto a woman fair growing old in loneliness. Valluvar has compared the munificent man to a fruit-bearing tree and to a medicinal plant just in the centre of the village. The miser's wealth is also a tree full of fruits in the midst of the village; only it is a poison-tree. Therefore one has to bring in the chapter on *oppuravu* in this part of the book on citizens.

4.87

Shying at things evil has become natural to the perfect man. It is said of Ramakrishna Paramahansa that his feeling of renunciation was so great that his body would shrink at the touch of money even when he was unconscious. This cultivated feeling of abhorrence at anything evil is real modesty; for modesty is not merely the blush of women. This higher modesty is a sign of perfection. His flesh itself shrinks and that is why perhaps all spirits claim his home of flesh as habitation. The perfect man shrinks from others guilt as much as his. In the absence of this natural shrinking from evil, majestic gait becomes a disease. The perfect man will give up his life rather than this modesty. In the absence of this modesty man is but a marionette.

4.88

This feeling of human kindness expresses itself in varied ways, trying to help the perfection of others and to help the family and the State through all their activities. Action thus is the touchstone of human perfection—a never ceasing action aiming at the exaltation of the family and society. Paripperumāl will interpret this to mean that such a great man has no time to satisfy fully even his hunger. Manly exertion and a wider intellectual vision thus become useful for others, and God Himself hastens to help such a man. His ideal is thus spontaneously achieved and the whole world will cling to him and claim kinship with him. He is a greater warrior; for he bears the brunt of all

natural attacks on his family and suffers all miseries that may arise therefrom.

4.89

The incessant human effort inspired by the concern for the common weal should result in producing wealth, which as a social institution solves all problems of family and society. Has not Valluvar praised it as the great light of truth which dispels all darkness of misery and ignorance? At this point, therefore the significance of *poruḷ* is realised. The great man is active. Activity seems to be his very breath inspired as he is by love. This activity should take the form of works. In that age of agriculture, that activity was considered the best. In modern age we may take *uḷavu* as labour in the descriptive and illustrative sense rather than in an exhaustive sense. However, even in the modern world agriculture has its own virtues not shared by other professions. Agriculture is the backbone of a nation. "Whirl as the world will, it must after all rely on the plough. The agriculture is the linch-pin of the progressive van of society for agriculturists support all, whilst others are subservient. One who works by his own hand knows the sufferings of life and therefore hastens to help the beggar though he himself will never beg." It would have been noticed that in praising the perfect man who has not renounced the world, Valluvar often tries to point out that he is superior to one who has renounced. Therefore here also he points out, that if the husbandman sits still with folded arms, even they who have renounced will have no place in this

world. Every aspect of agriculture has to be cared and watched. Land is an exacting mistress who demands the presence of the agriculturists always by her side. She laughs at those who plead poverty and lead an idle life.

4.9

4.91

Thus far, the glories of the good citizens have been sung. But when that perfection is not reached by the citizens, certain evil effects flow and the land is steeped in poverty. One has then to live by begging. Valluvar shudders at the very idea of begging at others' doors which is the most powerful dehumanising force in society. Under such an environment instead of human perfection, there is degradation. Therefore, in the remaining four chapters, he emphasises the greatness of human perfection nurtured by the State and society through the proper environment they have provided, and points out its contrast with the picture of a society leading to human degradation. It has already been pointed out that Valluvar believing as he does, in the innate divinity of Man, does not forget the importance of Nature and environment in human progress. Poverty is the greatest enemy of man ; for, then man ceases to be human. As Avvaiyār sings, when there is chronic hunger, honour, munificence, nobility, greatness, education, wisdom, helpful effort, *tapas* and love, all fly away. Therefore Valluvar asserts that there is nothing more painful than poverty, except if it be poverty itself. Poverty as a chronic hankering, destroys

all tradition and all human speech and leads to infinite miseries. Even the mother looks upon the *unrighteous poor* as a stranger. Mark the words *unrighteous poor*. Poverty is veritable death. One may sleep peacefully in fire but not in poverty; it is indeed the depth of human degradation. That this misery does not inspire the poor to welcome renunciation is what Valluvar has referred to elsewhere. They are fated to be demons wasting other men's salt and gruel or, as Kāḷiṅkar puts it, "they become death unto their own erstwhile propriety and good behaviour".

4.92

Valluvar, however, recognises the duty of the good citizen to help the unfortunate. What else can the unfortunate do than beg, if there are those who may be begged of. If the latter withhold any help, the blame is theirs and not the beggars. Begging becomes a pleasure when the help comes without causing pain. There is a charm in begging before those who know their duty. Begging is as blissful as munificence before those who will not withhold anything even in their dreams. Does not this begging bring out all that is good in man? Where will munificence be if there is no one to receive the gift? In the Buddhist epic, *Maṇimākalai* therefore the munificent *Āputtiraṇ* is so cursed to have no one to receive his kindness. In the absence of those who seek help from others, where can be cooperation and where can be the exhibition of human virtues? In its absence the world becomes a stage wherein strut wooden dolls.

4.93

This ought not to be interpreted as glorifying beggary; for, Valluvar shudders at the very thought of begging. Though from the point of view of the munificent citizen it offers an opportunity for the spontaneous expression of human perfection, from the point of view of the beggar, it is the most dehumanising force. Not to beg is million times better than begging. There is nothing harder than the foolhardiness that believes in ending its indigence by begging. The contentment which refuses to beg even in want, is greater than all the Universe put together. Nothing is sweeter than even the watery gruel earned by one's own toil. Seeking help even for a righteous cause is degrading. The beggar's life is almost dead at a rebuff. But where hides the life of the man who denies help? For verily the latter cannot be a living human being. Valluvar explains in a spirit of righteous indignation against whoever is responsible for a society which tolerates begging. "May the ordainer" he cries, "of the present world perish, if the society is, so organised that one has to live only through mendicancy." Therefore it is the duty of man to rectify such an organisation. Coming in the best tradition of Valluvar, Bharati sings 'If there is no food for a single individual, let us destroy this dying world and reshape a new world'.

4.94

The last chapter deals with the degradation of Man, the very opposite of human perfection. The degenerate resemble the perfect men in appearance. What an exact resemblance! They are indeed fortunate,

for they feel no qualms of conscience. They are like gods doing whatever they like. They compete in degradation. Fear is their only virtue; perhaps there is also a little amount of strong desire, as a motive. They will never help except when the robber breaks their jaws. They are like the sugar cane which yields its sweet juice only when it is crushed to death. If others are prosperous, the reprobate hastens to slander. Valluvar therefore exclaims: "When suffering presses them down, the degenerate rush to sell themselves away. What other purpose do they serve?" Thus ends *poruṭpāl*.

## 4.10

The political philosophy of Tiruvalluvar is unique in that it makes society and government, the cradle for perfect men, the perfect men described in *aṟattu-p-pāl*. That is why Tiruvalluvar insists on the means being as ennobling as the ends themselves. Even the most intricate problems of Statecraft and diplomacy are discussed from their basic human point of view so as to be understood by all without any mystery or mystification.

## 4.11

Thus the philosophy of Tiruvalluvar is a well integrated one, where *Kāma* or the experience of idealised Love becomes the starting point for *Dharma* or human perfection reaching the stage of universal love and where *Artha* provides the proper environment for the development of that perfection. Nothing is repressed; nothing is negated. Everything is given its proper place so that in the end there is complete

harmony, the harmony which is experienced at the end, as universal Love. That is the unique contribution of Tiruvalluvar.

It has been possible to evaluate his philosophy in this way only within the Pan-Indian background of *puruṣārtha*. Valluvar works within that background; but by varying emphasis on certain aspects, he has given us a new portrait of the ideal human life which attracts the attention of all and which inspires in us all the hope that we can achieve that success with the practical advice he has given.

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